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Secret recordings of spouse can be used in divorce cases

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England lords over India at the Lords

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DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

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Shux begins journey to Earth, splashdown in California

Astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla with crew members of the Axiom-4 mission and International Space Station **PHOTO: PTI**

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

After an 18-day stay at the International Space Station (ISS), astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla and three others of the commercial Axiom-4 mission are setting off on a return journey to Earth on Monday.

Shukla, the second Indian astronaut to travel to space, will board Dragon spacecraft at 2pm IST and embark on the return journey two hours later.

"Undocking from the ISS is scheduled for no earlier than 6:05 am CT (4.35 pm IST)," Axiom Space said in a statement.

- Splashdown is expected off the coast of California approximately 22.5 hours after undocking and the space capsule will be recovered by a specialised ship.

On 13 July, the expedition's 73 astronauts organised a traditional farewell ceremony for the Axiom-4 crew comprising Shukla, commander Peggy Whitson and mission specialists Slawosz Uznanski-Wisniewski of Poland and Tibor Kapu of Hungary.

"Jaldi hi dharti pe mulaqat karte hai (we will meet on earth soon)," Shukla said from onboard the ISS.

The descent of Dragon spacecraft from the ISS is designed to be completely autonomous.

Splashdown is expected off the coast of California approximately 22.5 hours after undocking and the space capsule will be recovered by a specialised ship.

"…….I think it has been incredible because of the people involved. People standing behind me (the Expedition 73 crew), have made it really special for us….," Shukla said.

The four astronauts are expected to spend seven days in rehabilitation as they adjust back to life on earth. *—PTI*

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SALAR UPCLOSE

GBA will be a game-changer for City: Rizwan Arshad

MOHAMMED YOUSUF

Congress MLA Rizwan Arshad dubbed the proposed Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) a "game-changer" for the City's development, citing decentralised governance and improved citizen engagement. In an interview with Salar News, he dismissed BJP's criticism of the GBA, highlighting bipartisan support during legislative review. Arshad, a vocal opponent of the Centre's Hindi imposition, stressed the importance of linguistic diversity. He also raised concerns over possible parliamentary seat loss for southern states post-delimitation. Defending Congress' welfare schemes, he said they help tackle inflation and unemployment. On the IMA scam, he noted that recovery efforts have begun, unlike in other cases.

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DGCA asks airlines to check fuel switch locks in Boeings

Etihad, S Korea too order inspection, pilots urged to be cautious

MUMBAI, 14 JULY

Aviation watchdog Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Monday directed airlines to inspect the fuel switch locking system in their Boeing 787 and 737 planes by 21 July.

This comes two days after Air Accidents Investigation Branch's (AAIB) report said fuel switches were cut off be-fore the Air India plane crash that killed 260 people last month. Fuel control switches regulate the flow of fuel into the aircraft engines.

"In the cockpit voice recording, one of the pilots is heard asking the other why did he cut off? The other pilot responded that he did not do so," the report said.

There are more than 150 Boeing 737s and 787s being operated by Indian airlines.

Air India has 33 wide-body Boeing 787s while Air India Express has 75 narrow-body 737s. IndiGo has seven B-737 Max 8 and one B787-9. Akasa Air and SpiceJet too operate these aircraft. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), back in 2018, had flagged the potential disengagement of the fuel control switch locking feature on Boeing 787s and 737s.

Air India has 33 wide-body Boeing 787s while Air India Express has 75 narrow-body 737s **PHOTO: PTI**

In the wake of the AAIB report, globally, some airlines, including Etihad Airways, have initiated steps for in-spection of the fuel switch locking system in their Boeing 787s and have pilots to exercise caution with them. South Korea too ordered its airlines to check Boeing fuel switches.

AI CEO says no mechanical issues with 787-8s

Air India CEO and MD Campbell Wilson said that the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau's (AAIB) prelimi-nary report into the recent Boeing 787-8 incident found no mechanical or maintenance issues with the aircraft or its engines.

In a message to staff, Wilson confirmed the pilots passed their mandatory pre-flight breathalyser tests and no medical concerns were noted.

He said that as a precaution, Air India inspected every Boeing 787 in its fleet following the crash and all were cleared for service. Air India has also started checks of the fuel switch locking system in their Boeing 787 and 737 aircraft. *—PTI*

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In China, EAM flags 'restrictive' trade

BEIJING/NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

India and China should build on "good progress" in normalising the bilateral ties to address border-related issues including de-escalation, and it is essential to avoid "restrictive trade measures and roadblocks", External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Monday during talks with his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi.

Jaishankar met Wang hours after he landed in China on a two-day visit to attend a conclave of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).

In his opening remarks at the meeting, Jaishankar said the bilateral relations can develop in a "positive trajectory" on the foundation that differences should not become disputes and competition should not become a conflict.

Jaishankar said India hopes "zero tolerance for terrorism" will be upheld at the upcoming meeting of the SCO, in reference to Pakistan's alleged support to cross-border terrorism.

"This is the fundamental basis for mutual strategic trust and for smooth development of bilateral relations. It is now incumbent on us to address other aspects related to the border, including de-escalation," he said. —PTI

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US MULLS 20% TARIFFS FOR INDIA

United States is reportedly working on an interim trade deal with India that could reduce proposed tariffs to below 20 per cent, sources told Bloomberg on Monday. Talks between both nations have been extended beyond the earlier 9 July deadline, with hopes to finalise the agreement by next week or by 31 July. A team from India's has arrived in Washington for a fresh round of trade deal discussions.

WPI inflation goes negative after 19 months, dips 0.13%

NEW DELHI, 14 JUL

Wholesale inflation (WPI) in India turned negative in June at (-) 0.13 per cent as against 0.39 per cent in May, official data from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry showed on Monday. WPI-based inflation was 0.39 per cent in May. It was 3.43 per cent in June last year. "(It) is primarily due to decrease in prices of food articles, mineral oils, manufacture of basic metals, crude petroleum & natural gas etc," the industry ministry said.*—PTI*

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Nothing much can be done: Centre on nurse in Yemen

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

The Centre on Monday informed the Supreme Court that it was doing whatever was "utmost possible" to save an Indian nurse facing execution on 16 July, but "nothing much" could be done keeping in view Yemen's status. Attorney general R Venkataramani said the government was keen to save its citizens and was doing "utmost possible" in the matter. *—PTI*

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2nd suspected Nipah death in Kerala

PALAKKAD, 14 JULY

A 57-year-old man from Palakkad district in Kerala, who died on 12 July 12, is suspected to have been infected with the Nipah virus, prompting the government to ramp up contact tracing and field-level surveillance in the area. The man had been undergoing treatment at a private hospital here. Authorities urged people in Palakkad and Malappuram to avoid unnecessary visits to hospitals. *—PTI*

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RUSSIA TO BRING IN 1M WORKERS FROM INDIA AMID CRUNCH

MOSCOW, 14 JULY

Russia will import up to 1 million skilled Indians by the end of this year to address labour shortage in the country's highly industrialised areas, a business leader said.

"A new Consulate General is opening in Yekaterinburg, which will deal with these issues," Andrey Besedin, the head of the Ural Chamber of Commerce and Industry, told the RosBusinessConsulting (RBC) news agency. Sverdlovsk, with the capital Yekaterinburg, is situated in the Ural Mountains and is home to Russian heavy industry and military-industrial complex, including world-famous Uralmash and T-90 series tank maker Ural Wagon Zavod. *—PTI*

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Don't misuse free speech online: SC

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

The Supreme Court on Monday voiced concern over the misuse of the right to freedom of speech and expression, highlighting growing abuse on social media platforms.

During a hearing on a plea by cartoonist Hemant Malviya, accused of sharing objectionable content targeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi and RSS workers, the bench of Justices Sudhanshu Dhulia and Aravind Kumar remarked, "This is definitely a case where freedom of speech and expression is being abused."

Malviya, booked in Madhya Pradesh, sought anticipatory bail, which was earlier denied by the High Court.

His lawyer, Vrinda Grover, argued that the post was made in 2021 and no law-and-order issue had arisen since.

The court posted the matter for further hearing on 15 July.

In a separate but related case, the Supreme Court extended interim protection to Wazahat Khan, booked across multiple states for old tweets allegedly offensive to a Hindu deity. Khan had filed a complaint against influencer Sharmistha Panoli for communal remarks, following which retaliatory FIRs were lodged against him.

The court stressed that citizens must value free speech and exercise self-restraint, especially online. It noted that such cases were clogging the judicial system and called for deliberation on guidelines for responsible expression. The bench asked counsels from different states to file their responses as it considers broader regulation on social media speech. *—PTI*

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2ND LONGEST CABLE BRIDGE

Karnataka got India's second-longest cable-stayed bridge, the Sigandur Bridge, across the Sharavathi backwaters between Ambaragodlu and Kalasavalli in Sagara taluk, Shivamogga. Union Minister Nitin Gadkari inaugurated the 2.44km-long bridge on Monday. Built at a cost of Rs 472 crore, the bridge is expected to significantly reduce travel distance from Sagara to villages around Sigandur, a region renowned for the Chowdeshwari Temple **PHOTO: PTI**

Cong expels Priyank's aide after arrest in drug case

KALABURAGI, 14 JULY

Congress on Monday expelled its block president Lingaraj Kanni in Kalaburagi district following reports of his arrest in Maharashtra in connection with a drug peddling case.

Seizing the opportunity to attack Congress, BJP claimed that Kanni was a close aide of Kalaburagi District In-charge Minister Priyank Kharge.

Kanni, who is also closely associated with Gulbarga Dakshin Assembly constituency MLA Allamaprabhu Patil, was arrested in Thane city, while allegedly selling narcotic substances. The Kalyan police also seized 120 bottles of banned codeine syrup from his possession. Kanni is said to be a close associate of South Kalaburagi Congress MLA Allamaprabhu. *—PTI*

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'SUGAR AND FAT KILLS'

Samosas, jalebis to get cigarette-like warnings

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY 2025

Popular snacks like samosas, jalebis, pakoras, vada pav, and even chai biscuits will soon carry cigarette-style health warnings, as part of a initiative by the Union Health Ministry to combat rising obesity and lifestyle diseases in India.

These warnings will highlight the high content of oil, sugar, and trans fats in these foods, nutrients closely linked to non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease.

In a letter dated 21 June, Union Health Secretary Punya Salila Srivastava urged all ministries, departments, and autonomous bodies to display "Oil and Sugar Boards" in cafeterias and public spaces, detailing fat and sugar content in commonly consumed items such as samosas, pakoras, burgers, soft drinks, and chocolate pastries.

These warnings will highlight the high content of oil, sugar, and trans fats in these foods **PHOTO: FREEPIK**

The ministry also recommended printing health messages on official stationery — letterheads, notepads, folders, and publications — to reinforce healthy living at the workplace.

Prevalence of childhood obesity is impacted by poor dietary habits and reduced physical activity. As per the Lancet GBD 2021 obesity forecasting study published in 2025, the number of overweight and obese adults in India is projected to rise from 18 crore in 2021 to 44.9 crore by 2050, making it the country with the second-highest global burden, she said.

Obesity significantly raises the risk of non-communicable diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, and certain cancers. It also affects mental health, mobility, and quality of life. The campaign is being rolled out first in Nagpur, where the All India Institute of Medical Sciences will serve as the pilot location for the initiative. *—PTI*

SUPERSTAR SAROJA DEVI NO MORE

BENGALURU, 14 JULY

Veteran South Indian actor B Saroja Devi died on Monday at her residence in Malleswaram, Bengaluru, at the age of 87 due to age-related ailments, film industry sources confirmed.

Known fondly as 'Kannadathu Paingili' (Kannada's parrot) in Tamil and 'Abhinaya Saraswati' (Saraswati of expressions) in Kannada, Saroja Devi was remembered with deep admiration by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Deputy Chie Minister DK Shivakumar, and other political leaders.

Siddaramaiah, in a tribute on 'X', said, "She acted in about 200 Tamil, Telugu, Hindi, and Kannada films and was known as Abhinaya Saraswati. Her soulful performances in films like 'Kittur Chennamma', 'Babruvahana', and 'Anna Thangi' come to mind."

Shivakumar also expressed his grief, stating, "She acted in five languages and served the film industry for six decades."

Saroja Devi's legacy spans over 200 films across Tamil, Kannada, Telugu, and Hindi cinema, making her one of Indian cinema's most celebrated and enduring stars. *—PTI*

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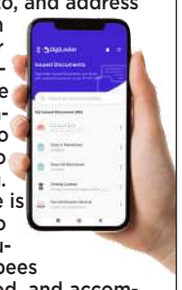
7 JANUARY, 1938 — 14 JULY, 2025

In a first, K'taka starts DigiLockers for nurses

BENGALURU, 14 JULY

In a first-of-its-kind initiative in India, the Karnataka State Nursing Council will launch a DigiLocker-based registration system for nurses, enabling Aadhaar e-KYC-based digital certificate issuance. The new technology will be inaugurated on Tuesday by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah. The system allows the Nursing Council to retrieve personal details, photo, and address directly from the Aadhaar server, eliminating the need for candidates to travel to Bengaluru. This move is expected to save thousands of rupees in travel, food, and accommodation costs, especially benefiting women, pregnant nurses, and new mothers.



According to Nursing Council Registrar K Mallu, the technology also helps prevent certificate forgery. Through DigiLocker-Requester, marks cards and ID proofs will be fetched directly from official sources, while the final registration certificate will be issued digitally via DigiLocker-Issuer. *—Salar News*

CM 'not invited' by Gadkari for bridge inauguration

BJP says invitation was sent, but Cong boycotted event

SHIVAMOGGA/ BENGALURU, 14 JULY

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and his Cabinet colleagues on Monday boycotted the inauguration of the Sigandur Bridge in Shivamogga by Union Road Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari, claiming they were not formally invited.

"I was not invited. I spoke to Nitin Gadkari, and he said he would postpone it. Later, I wrote to him. But BJP leaders seem to have gone ahead without informing me. I have a pre-scheduled event in Indi, so I'm not attending. None of us are going—as a mark of protest," Siddaramaiah said, adding that even the PWD Minister, the district in-charge Minister, and the local MLA stayed away.

Congress leaders accused the BJP-led Centre of violating federal protocol and deliberately sidelining the state government. "This is an insult to Karnataka. How can an event of such importance be organised without involving the elected state government? It's clear they are playing petty politics," said a senior Congress minister.

Union Ministers Nitin Gadkari and Pralhad Joshi with BJP leader BS Yediyurappa, State BJP President BY Vijayendra and Shivamogga MP BY Raghavendra at the inauguration of India's second-longest cable-stayed bridge, the 6km Sharavathi Bridge, in Shivamogga on Monday ***PHOTO: PTI***

Public Works Minister Satish Jarkiholi and DyCM DK Shivakumar also criticised the Centre for attempting to take credit for a project that involved significant contributions from the state government. However, Gadkari refuted the allegations, stating on 'X' that invitations were sent to Siddaramaiah on 11 July and again on 12 July, offering the option for virtual participation. He posted both letters and reiterated the Centre's commitment to cooperative federalism and adherence to protocol.

The event saw participation from Union Minister Pralhad Joshi, BJP veteran BS Yediyurappa, and Shivamogga MP BY Raghavendra. Raghavendra claimed he had personally invited the chief minister on 9 July and criticised Congress leaders for politicising a key development project. *—PTI*

BJP mocks Cong as Priyank's 'aide' held in drug case

KALABURAGI, 14 JULY

- Reacting to BJP's criticism, Priyank Kharge said the Congress has taken action against Kanni and thrown him out of the party

Following the arrest of the Congress party's block president in Kalaburagi district in Maharashtra in connection with a drug peddling case, the BJP on Monday questioned District In-charge Minister Priyank Kharge's claims of making the district drug-free.

"Aren't you ashamed to keep drug dealers in your circle?" the party asked.

Reacting to BJP's criticism, Priyank Kharge said the Congress has taken action against Kanni and thrown him out of the party. "The BJP would love to malign me in any possible way," he said.

Questioning BJP as to what action it has taken against its MLA Munirathna and leader Yediyurappa, who are facing various allegations, Kharge said, "You people (BJP) have people who abuse dalits, who rape woman and a POCSO accused in you party and you don't want to talk about that... at least we are taking action, if they have guts let them take action on Munirathna and Yediyurappa and then talk about me...What action has their party taken against BJP MLA Munirathna and leader Yediyurappa, both of whom are facing various allegations?"

"He is an office-bearer – that we cannot deny. But calling him a 'close aide' has become a habit for the BJP. After the news broke, he was immediately suspended from the party. I believe he was caught peddling some cough syrups worth around Rs 27,000. But whether it is Rs 27,000 or Rs 27 crore, breaking the law is unacceptable to the party. If he has done something wrong, we have taken appropriate action," Kharge said. *—PTI*

High-level meet on 16 July to boost quantum tech

BENGALURU, 14 JULY

In a significant step toward positioning Karnataka as a national hub for quantum technologies, the state government will hold a high-level committee meeting on 16 July, officials said on Monday. This meeting will be held under the joint leadership of Minister for Science and Technology and Minor Irrigation NS Boseraju, Minister for Industries MB Patil, Minister for IT/BT Priyank Kharge and Minister for Higher Education MC Sudhakar, they said. Boseraju said the State has already created a strong foundation in the quantum technology sector. Notably, India's first dedicated Quantum Research Park has been established at the Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru. The state has sanctioned Rs 48 crore for the development of the project's second phase, the minister said. *—PTI*

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Dy CM DK Shivakumar distribute bus tickets to women passengers in Bengaluru ***PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD***

Shakti scheme registers 500 cr free bus rides

BENGALURU, 14 JULY

'Sakthi' scheme, announced by the Congress government, providing free bus travel for women, crossed the 500 crore free rides mark on Monday, official sources said.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Deputy chief minister DK Shivakumar, and Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy celebrated the occasion by issuing 500th crore free ticket to a woman passenger here. 'Shakti' scheme, which provides free bus travel for all women domiciled in the state, is among the five guarantee schemes implemented by the Congress government on coming to power.

Launched on 11 June, 2023, the scheme has so far cost the government Rs 12,669 crores, officials said. *—PTI*

200 disabled-friendly buses launched in Mysuru

MYSURU, 14 JULY

Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy on Monday launched city buses equipped with voice-guided assistive technology to help visually impaired passengers travel independently in Mysuru.

Speaking after launching this scheme, the minister said the new system has already been introduced on 125 buses in Bengaluru.

He said his government will give instructions to install this system to 7,000 new buses to be rolled out shortly across the State.

The new system named Divya Spandana incorporates an audio device on buses that visually impaired passengers can activate using a remote key to get route numbers and other details.

When the "Find" button is pressed at a bus stop, the bus's module announces the route number. If it matches the destination, pressing "Select" alerts the driver and conductor that a visually impaired passenger is boarding, ensuring that the bus waits longer for safe entry.

The same process is used while disembarking at the destination, too. *—Salar News*

UNACCEPTABLE ARROGANCE

Performing artistes protest against alleged manhandling by the officials upon asking for their payments, at Ravindra Kalakshetra, in Bengaluru on Monday ***PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD***

19 rescued in Bidar anti-begging drive

BIDAR, 14 JULY

Deputy Commissioner Shilpa Sharma reported that 19 individuals involved in begging were rescued during recent inspections across public areas in Kalaburagi.

Among them were 14 children, with two admitted to the District Health Centre (BRIMS) for medical evaluation. The remaining 12 children and three women were placed in the District Women and Child Welfare Department's shelter home, while two men were sent to a rehabilitation centre under the Bidar City Municipal Corporation.

Begging remains a widespread issue in Karnataka's urban areas, often involving organised rackets. In Bidar, the use of small children, sometimes rented for a day, and women with infants in begging is on the rise. To combat this, a task force committee meeting was held on July 11 under the Karnataka Prohibition of Beggary Act, 1975. Officials were instructed to act decisively against such networks.

The Deputy Commissioner stressed that addressing begging requires more than enforcement — it demands compassion, rehabilitation, and collective action. Exploiting children for begging is a criminal offence under the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015, carrying up to 3 years' imprisonment and a Rs 1 lakh fine.

Citizens are urged to report incidents by calling child helpline 1098. *—Salar News*

Tunnel road will serve the elite while burdening poor: Tejasvi

BENGALURU, 14 JULY 2025

BJP MP Tejasvi Surya on Monday launched a scathing attack on Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar, calling the proposed Bengaluru tunnel road project a "vanity" scheme meant to serve the elite while burdening the common citizen.

The Rs 17,780 crore project, to be executed under the modified Build-Own-Operate-Transfer (BOOT) model, includes an 18km tunnel road with a proposed toll of Rs 660. Surya questioned its viability, highlighting a Rs 7,100 crore viability gap funding requirement and pointing out that 90 per cent of Bengalureans who don't own cars would be funding a project for the 10 per cent who do.

"This project will only benefit the crorepatis of Sadashivanagar and millionaires of Koramangala 4th Block," said the Bengaluru South MP. Citing studies by IISc and other mobility experts, he said the tunnel would increase private vehicle use and worsen traffic congestion.

Surya compared the cost per km unfavourably with national projects like the Atal Tunnel, the Mumbai Coastal Road, and the 655-km Trivandrum-Kasargod highway, questioning why this City project is so expensive.

He alleged irregularities in the Rs 9.5 crore Detailed Project Report (DPR), claiming data was copied from a Rs 1.6 crore Bengaluru Metro Rail Corporation Ltd (BMRCL) DPR. The report also bizarrely referenced Malegaon and Nashik, raising suspicions of plagiarism.

He raised concerns over the credibility of consultants involved, alleging that one JV partner was debarred in an NHAI project in Madhya Pradesh, while others were linked to a Rs 500 crore scam in Jammu & Kashmir.

Surya also criticised the government for proceeding without Bengaluru Metropolitan Land Transport Authority approval, in violation of Section 19 of the BMLTA Act, and urged investment in mass transit instead. *—PTI*

Raj urges State to drop Devanahalli land acquisition

BENGALURU, 14 JULY

The Eddelu Karnataka and actor–activist Prakash Raj on Monday urged the State government to abandon its proposed land acquisition in Channarayapatna hobli, Devanahalli. The plan aims to acquire over 1,700 acres for a hi-tech Defence and Aerospace Park, which has been opposed by farmers protesting for over 1,180 days.

Prakash Raj, along with Eddelu Karnataka leaders, criticised the Congress government for continuing BJP-era policies. They warned that if the government prioritises corporate interests over farmers, it would be a serious betrayal of public trust.

They accused the Congress of failing to repeal anti-farmer and anti-labour laws like the Land Reform Act, APMC Amendment Act, and the four labour codes.

The government also drew criticism for neglecting issues concerning Bagar Hukum farmers, forest dwellers, Dalit land protection under PTCL, minority safety, SC/ST welfare funds, and internal reservations.

Eddelu Karnataka stressed that the Devanahalli struggle represents wider public anger over Congress's failure to fulfil promises beyond the five guarantees. *—Salar News*

'GODDESS OF ACTING'

Saroja Devi: The 1st female superstar of Kannada cinema

When 17-year-old B Saroja Devi made her Kannada debut in 'Mahakavi Kalidasa' (1955), her doe-eyed beauty and magnetic screen presence won over audiences instantly. She would go on to become a towering figure in Indian cinema, with an illustrious career spanning Kannada, Tamil, Telugu and Hindi films.

Her co-star in that debut, actor-filmmaker Honnappa Bhagavathar – one of the pioneers of Kannada cinema – would later proudly describe himself as the man who "discovered Saroja Devi". Born in Bengaluru, she rose to be crowned the first female superstar of Kannada cinema.

Saroja Devi shared the screen with M.G. Ramachandran (MGR), Tamil film icon and former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, in 48 films. Their electric chemistry made her MGR's "lucky mascot", and their 1958 film

B Saroja Devi ***PHOTO: PTI***

'Nadodi Mannan' propelled her to instant stardom. Their 1966 hit 'Anbe Vaa' remains a cult classic.

Though celebrated across all South Indian languages and Hindi cinema—earning her the nickname 'Chaturbhaasha Taare' (the four-language star)—she shone brightest in Tamil cinema. Her Tamil debut was as a dancer in B.R. Panthulu's 'Thangamalai Ragasiyam' (1957), and she was affectionately called 'Kannadathu Paingli' (Kannada's parrot) in the Tamil industry.

> **Amma was the greatest of all times. No other female actor in the south has ever enjoyed the name and fame as her**
>
> —Khushbu, actor

> **Known as the Goddess of Acting, the multilingual star Saroja Devi set out with her charm. Possessing the pride of many languages, she acted alongside numerous legends. Humble salutations to the Goddess of Art**
>
> —Kiccha Sudeep, actor

In 1959, a year after her Tamil breakthrough, she made her Hindi debut with a supporting role in 'Paigham', starring Dilip Kumar and Vyjayanthimala. Despite limited screen time, she charmed audiences and soon landed leading roles in Bollywood hits such as 'Sasural' (1961) with Rajendra Kumar, 'Pyaar Kiya To Darna Kya' (1963) with Shammi Kapoor, and 'Beti Bete' (1964) with Sunil Dutt.

Her on-screen chemistry with top heroes of the time — including Sivaji Ganesan, Gemini Ganesan, Rajkumar, and NT Rama Rao (NTR) — made her a favourite across industries.

Saroja Devi made her Telugu debut in 'Panduranga Mahatyam' (1957) alongside NTR and Akkineni Nageswara Rao. NTR would later cast her in his directorial debut, 'Seetarama Kalyanam' (1961).

In Kannada, she delivered a powerful performance as 'Kittur Rani Chennamma' (1961), and starred in 'Amarashilpi Jakanachaari' (1964), the first Kannada film in full colour.

Though she continued acting after marriage, she gradually reduced her workload. Her final lead role was opposite Sivaji Ganesan in 'Parambariyam' (1993). Her last screen appearance came in 'Aadhavan' (2009), where she played the mother of a judge.

Saroja Devi was recognised with numerous honours, including the Padma Shri (1969), Padma Bhushan (1992), and a Lifetime Achievement Award during India's 60th Independence Day celebrations in 2008. She also received the prestigious Kalaimamani Lifetime Achievement Award from the Tamil Nadu government in 2009. *—PTI*

B Saroja Devi in earlier days ***PHOTO: SALAR***

PHOTO: ANI

ED grills Robert Vadra in money laundering case

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

Robert Vadra, the businessman husband of Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, was questioned by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in New Delhi for five hours regarding a money laundering investigation linked to UK-based arms consultant Sanjay Bhandari. Vadra arrived at the ED's office shortly after 11am, accompanied by Priyanka, who represents Wayanad in Kerala. The businessman is under investigation in three separate money laundering cases, including two related to alleged irregularities in land transactions. The ongoing case against Vadra and Bhandari stems from findings in a 2023 ED chargesheet, suggesting that Bhandari acquired a London property in 2009, with renovations allegedly funded by Vadra. *—PTI*

Delhi court holds National Herald order till 29 July

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

A Delhi court has reserved its judgement on whether to take cognisance of the chargesheet filed by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in the National Herald case. Special Judge Vishal Gogne announced that the matter would be examined further on 29 July. The ED has accused Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi, along with late Congress leaders Motilal Vora and Oscar Fernandes, as well as Suman Dubey and Sam Pitroda, plus a private firm, Young Indian, of conspiracy and money laundering regarding the alleged fraudulent acquisition of properties valued at Rs 2,000 crore belonging to Associated Journals Limited (AJL), the publisher of the National Herald. ED alleges that Gandhis held the majority 76 per cent shares in Young Indian. *—PTI*

M'rashtra considers lowering juvie age to 16 for drug cases

MUMBAI, 14 JULY

Maharashtra's Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis announced on Monday that the state government is contemplating lowering the legal definition of 'juvenile' in drug-related cases to 16 years, amid rising concerns over minors being exploited for narcotics peddling. Fadnavis, who also oversees the home portfolio, stated that the legislation will be amended to close existing legal loopholes. He confirmed that habitual drug traffickers would face charges under the stringent Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA). Fadnavis highlighted the involvement of foreign nationals, particularly Nigerians, in drug crimes, and proposed measures to facilitate the deportation of those committing minor offences to evade punishment. *—PTI*

'Anti sacrilege' Bill tabled in Punjab Assembly

CHANDIGARH, 14 JULY

A draft bill proposing stricter penalties for acts of sacrilege is expected to be introduced in the Punjab Assembly on Monday. Sources revealed that a cabinet meeting held ahead of the assembly's special session endorsed the anti-sacrilege bill, which may suggest life imprisonment for those found guilty of desecrating religious scriptures. In a bid to expedite justice, the bill may also establish special courts for handling sacrilege cases and include provisions to deny parole to offenders. Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann has indicated that while the legislation is being drafted, the government will consult various stakeholders and religious organisations to gather opinions before finalising the Bill. *—PTI*

Russia to import 1 million skilled Indians amid Ukraine war

MOSCOW, 14 JULY

- Indians would primarily fill the shortage of a highly qualified workforce in the Sverdlovsk region, which is home to Russian heavy industry and military-industrial complex, said a Russian official

Russia will import up to 1 million skilled Indians by the end of this year to address labour shortage in the country's highly industrialised areas, a business leader said.

Andrey Besedin, the head of the Ural Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said some of the workers will be deployed to the military operation in Ukraine. Young people do not go to factories, Besedin added.

The Indians would primarily fill the shortage of a highly qualified workforce in the Sverdlovsk region, which is home to Russian heavy industry and military-industrial complex. Besedin stressed that industrial enterprises were needed to increase production volumes, but the region was grappling with shortage of skilled workers.

He said Russia was considering inviting labourers from Sri Lanka and North Korea.

Migrant workers from India began to arrive at enterprises in Russian regions in 2024. They were in particular invited by the Kaliningrad fish processing complex "Za Rodinu" against the backdrop of a labour shortage.

According to the RBC news agency, the Russian Ministry of Labour predicted a workforce shortage of 3.1 million people by 2030. It proposed an increase in the quota for inviting qualified foreign workers in 2025 by 1.5 times to 0.23 million people.

According to the ministry's estimate, Russian industrial enterprises attracted 47 thousand qualified migrants from non-CIS countries in 2024.

The Ministry of Economic Development also called for expanding the geography of attracting workers from other countries. *—PTI*

Some of the workers will be deployed to the military operation in Ukraine PHOTO: FREEPIK

Jaishankar says ties between India, China are improving

Hopes for normalisation of ties and continuous dialogue

BEIJING/NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Monday during talks with his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi, said that relations between India and Beijing were steadily improving.

Since Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping in Kazan in October last year, the India-China relationship has been gradually moving in a positive direction, he said, adding, "Our responsibility is to maintain that momentum."

"We have made good progress in the past nine months for the normalisation of our bilateral relations. It is a result of the resolution of friction along the border and our ability to maintain peace and tranquility there," he said.

"We have also earlier agreed that differences should not become disputes, nor should competition ever become conflict. On this foundation, we can now continue to develop our ties along a positive trajectory," he said.

"In recent times, the two of us have had several opportunities to meet at international events and carry out strategic communication. It is our expectation that this will now be regular and take place in each other's countries," Jaishankar added.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar during a meeting with IDCPC Minister Liu Jianchao, in Beijing, China PHOTO: PTI

In New Delhi, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), describing the talks as "constructive and forward-looking", said the two sides agreed to take "additional practical steps", including travel to each other's country and direct flight connectivity, for facilitating people-to-people exchanges.

Jaishankar is visiting China to attend a conclave of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in the Chinese city of Tianjin.

This was Jaishankar's first visit to the neighbouring country since bilateral ties witnessed severe downturn following the 2020 military standoff along the Line of Actual Control in Ladakh.

The EAM also held talks with Chinese Vice President Han Zheng.

Pakistan Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar was also set to visit China to attend the Foreign Ministers' meeting of the SCO bloc. *—PTI*

PUSH AND PULL

In SC, Centre opposes Kerala withdrawing its plea against Guv

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

- Senior advocate KK Venugopal, representing Kerala, proposed to withdraw the plea, stating that it was irrelevant after the SC's ruling on Tamil Nadu's Governor

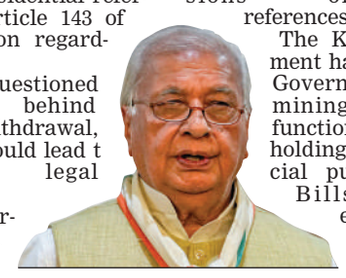
The Supreme Court of India has adjourned to 25 July the Kerala government's petitions challenging Governor Arif Mohammed Khan over delays in approving bills passed by the state assembly. The decision follows a request from Attorney General R Venkataramani for more time.

Senior advocate KK Venugopal, representing the Kerala government, proposed to withdraw the plea, stating that it had become irrelevant due to a recent Supreme Court ruling concerning Tamil Nadu's Governor. However, both Venkataramani and Solicitor General Tushar Mehta argued against this withdrawal, suggesting that the Kerala case could be linked to a presidential reference under Article 143 of the Constitution regarding bill assent.

Venugopal questioned the rationale behind opposing the withdrawal, suggesting it could lead t unnecsasarcy legal expenses.

The bench clarified that, in principle, there should not be an objection to withdrawing the petition, hence scheduling the matter for 25 July.

The court had earlier indicated its intent to evaluate whether the Tamil Nadu judgment, which established timelines for the President's assent to bills, also applied to Kerala's case. On 8 April, the Supreme Court ruled against the President's lengthy reservation of bills and mandated a three-month timeline for decisions on such references.



The Kerala government has accused the Governor of undermining legislative functioning by withholding assent to crucial public interest Bills for extended periods. *—PTI*

India-US begin talks in as tariff deadline nears

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

An Indian Commerce Ministry team reached Washington for another round of talks on the proposed bilateral trade agreement (BTA), set to begin on Monday, US time, an official said.

Chief Negotiator of India and Special Secretary in the Department of Commerce Rajesh Agrawal will join the team on Wednesday. The four-day talks will end on Thursday.

India's Deputy Chief Negotiator for the proposed BTA reached Washington for the talks on the first phase of the BTA, the official said.

The visit assumes significance as both sides have to iron out issues in sectors, like agriculture and automobiles.

It is also important as the US has further postponed the imposition of additional tariffs on several countries, including India, until 1 August. *—PTI*

Protest in Latur over attack on Sambhaji leader

LATUR, 14 JULY

Several outfits held a protest in Latur on Monday against the attack on Sambhaji Brigade leader Pravin Gaikwad a day earlier in Akkalkot in Solapur district.

Gaikwad was manhandled by activists of the Shiv Dharma Foundation on Sunday and ink was thrown on him for his alleged remarks against Swami Samarth, a revered 19th century saint whose 'samadhi' is in Akkalkot.

A viral video showed Gaikwad being pulled out of his car and manhandled by a group of people.

The protest in Latur was organised at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Chowk at 11am by outfits like Maratha Kranti Morcha, Sambhaji Brigade, Jijau Brigade, Maratha Seva Sangh, Vir Bhagat Singh Vidyarthi Parishad, Progressive Youth Federation, Swabhimani Muslim Organisation etc.

They said the assault was a conspiracy by communal forces against those propagating progressive thoughts.

Meanwhile in the in the Maharashtra assembly, Congress Legislature Party leader Vijay Wadettiwar demanded stringent action against the culprits.

Wadettiwar claimed it was a "murderous attack" on the Sambhaji Briagde leader and asked why police were not deployed at the event. *—PTI*

Ladakh, Haryana, Goa get new Guvs

Kavinder Gupta, Ashim Kumar Ghosh and Pusapati Ashok Gajapathi Raju PHOTO: ANI

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

Former civil aviation minister Pusapati Ashok Gajapathi Raju has been appointed as the new Governor of Goa, while Kavinder Gupta, former deputy chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir, is named the Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh. Senior BJP leader Ashim Kumar Ghosh from West Bengal has been designated as the Governor of Haryana.

Raju is a veteran leader of the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) from Andhra Pradesh while Gupta, a senior BJP figure, served as the mayor of Jammu city for three consecutive terms. Ghosh, meanwhile, lead BJP's West Bengal unit from 1999 to 2002. *—PTI*

Under 'house arrest', J&K CM & others jump wall for martyrs day

SRINAGAR, 14 JULY

A defiant Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Monday scaled the gates of the Naqshband Sahib graveyard to pay tributes to the 22 people killed by the Dogra army in 1931.

The dramatic scene unfolded a day after Abdullah and several leaders of the National Conference and opposition parties were allegedly put under house arrest to prevent them from going to the graveyard to mark Martyrs' Day.

National Conference President Farooq Abdullah took an autorickshaw from the Khanyar crossing to the martyrs memorial while Minister for Education Sakina Ittoo surprised everyone by riding pillion on a scooty to the memorial. Abdullah also lashed out at local media outlets. "Take a look at our local newspapers... The cowards have completely buried the fact that the entire elected government was locked up yesterday along. The newspapers with some guts have put it on the front page. Shame on the sellouts who buried the story, I hope the size of the envelope was worth it". *—PTI*

Omar Abdullah, National Conference Chief Farooq Abdullah PHOTO: PTI

J&K CM Omar Abdullah climbs a gate to pay tribute to 13 July martyrs at Naqshband Sahib graveyard PHOTO: PTI

DUBIOUS HISTORY

UK families: AI crash report raises questions against Boeing

The law firm representing the crash victim's families in the UK says the US had earlier flagged the Boeing fuel-cutoff switches PHOTO: PTI

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

The families of the British victims of the London-bound Air India plane crash are "troubled and concerned" following the release of a preliminary report and will be seeking answers to the "very serious questions" raised, the UK law firm advising over 20 of the families said on Monday.

Of the 241 passengers, including, 53 British nationals on board, only one British national, Vishwas Kumar Prakash on seat 11A, miraculously survived the tragedy.

Keystone Law pointed to a 'Special Airworthiness Information Bulletin' issued over six years ago by the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) relating to faulty fuel cutoff switches in the Boeing Dreamliner 787-8.

"This preliminary report raises very serious questions against Boeing and Air India," said James Healy-Pratt, Aviation Partner at Keystone Law. "There is a documented history of faulty fuel cutoff switches, which clearly created an unsafe condition. Further, there is absolutely no good reason for the fuel cutoff switches to be transitioned to 'cutoff' at that critical stage of take-off of AI 171".

"The families will be seeking to obtain answers from Boeing through action in the US courts and will continue discussions with Air India in London, England. Air safety is a right and not a privilege," said Healy-Pratt.

"The families note that a relevant advisory – Special Airworthiness Information Bulletin NM-18-33 – was issued in late 2018 by the US safety regulator (FAA), relating to faulty fuel cutoff switches, including part number 4TL837-3D, which was fitted to this aircraft," Keystone said.

"This bulletin was issued during the period when independent US Congressional investigations later established that there had been 'regulatory capture' of the FAA by Boeing, resulting in grossly insufficient oversight of Boeing that failed to ensure the safety of the flying public," it added.

Meanwhile, the Indian Pilots Guild, the managing committee of AI, demanded a "fact-driven investigation", not driven by conjecture.

The report also revealed that AI had replaced the Throttle Control Module of twice in the last six years, following a 2019 directive from Boeing. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

Former Miss Puducherry dies by suicide

PUDUCHERRY, 14 JULY

Former Miss Puducherry San Rachel, 26, died by suicide by allegedly consuming a large number of blood pressure tablets. Depression and financial stress reportedly drove the popular model and social media personality to suicide. Her father was unable to provide financial help to her. She was first admitted to the government general hospital here and subsequently shifted to two other hospitals and died on July 12, police added. A case was registered at the Orleanpet police station. A Tashildar-level probe is also initiated as the death had occurred within a few years of marriage. *—PTI*

Help is available. Please call Tele Manas at 14416, SAHAI at 080-25497777 for support

9 killed in road accident in Andhra Pradesh

AMARAVATI, 14 JULY

A fatal road accident in Annamayya district has left nine dead and twelve others injured after a mango-laden truck overturned on a mini truck. The incident occurred when the truck, carrying labourers seated on top of mango crates, lost control while ascending an embankment on NH-716. Superintendent of Police V Vidyasagar Naidu reported that the labourers fell from the truck, resulting in multiple fatalities. Four of the injured are in critical condition and receiving treatment at a Kadapa hospital. Complaints allege rash driving by the driver, prompting police to launch an investigation. Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu expressed his condolences, pledging support for the victims' families and ensuring quality medical care for the injured. *—PTI*

Radhika murder is an open and shut case: Cops

BENGALURU, 14 JULY

Haryana police on Sunday said the murder of tennis player Radhika Yadav was an "open and shut" case, and a charge sheet was being filed based on forensic and testimonial evidence. Her friend Himaanshika Singh Rajput posted a video on Instagram, saying that the murder was triggered by social pressure and that er father had planned the murder three days before it happened. Her father's friends allegedly provoked him with comments about her clothing, makeup and growing online popularity. The accused has confessed to the crime. These video statements are not part of the investigation and would not be used as evidence, police said. *—Agencies*

Kissing scene in 'Superman' cut; CBFC slammed

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

People who went to watch the newly released 'Superman' were frustrated to find that the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) removed kissing scenes from the film. The viewers' complained on social media, questioning the rationale behind cutting off "standard romantic moments". They blamed the CBFC for "lacking the maturity." The film, directed by James Gunn, was released worldwide on 11 July. The version released in India differed from the international cut. The CBFC reportedly removed many scenes, including a 33-second kiss between David and Rachel. CBFC objected to what it described as a "sensual visual" and asked for the scene to be shortened. *—Agencies*

Secret recordings of spouse can be used in divorce cases

When a spouse records another, it denotes lack of trust: SC

NEW DELHI, 13 JULY

The Supreme Court on Monday held that secretly recorded conversations of spouses are admissible as evidence in matrimonial cases, saying the fact that spouses are snooping on each other is proof the marriage is not going strong and hence, can be used in judicial proceedings.

The court set aside a verdict of the Punjab and Haryana High Court that had held that the secret conversations between spouses are protected under Section 122 of the Evidence Act and cannot be used in judicial proceedings.

It restored the trial court order, saying recorded conversations can be used in matrimonial proceedings.

The family court was to proceed with the case after taking judicial note of the recorded conversations.

The family court in Bathinda had allowed a husband to rely on a compact disc containing recordings of phone calls with his wife to support claims of cruelty. The wife challenged this in the high court, arguing that the recordings were a violation of her fundamental right to privacy.

The high court accepted the wife's plea and ruled the evidence inadmissible, stating that surreptitious recording amounted to a clear breach of privacy and was legally unjustified.

"Some arguments have been made that permitting such evidence would jeopardise domestic harmony and matrimonial relationships as it would encourage snooping on the spouses, therefore infringing the objective of Section 122 of the Evidence Act," the court said.

"…. ….. snooping on each other…… ……..a broken relationship and denotes a lack of trust between them," it said.

The detailed judgement is awaited. *—PTI*

SC dismisses plea on SIMI's ban extension

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

The Supreme Court on Monday refused to entertain a plea challenging a judicial tribunal's order confirming the five-year extension of ban imposed on the Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI). The tribunal was constituted under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 after the Centre extended the ban.*—PTI*

FOR DIPLOMATIC INTERVENTION

Nurse execution row: Nothing much to do, says Centre

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

The Centre on Monday informed the Supreme Court that it was doing whatever was "utmost possible" to save an Indian nurse facing execution on 16 July, but "nothing much" could be done keeping in view Yemen's status.

Nimisha Priya
PHOTO: X

Attorney general R Venkataramani said the government was keen to save its citizens and was doing "utmost possible" in the matter.

"…there is nothing much the Government of India can do," he said.

The government recently wrote to the public prosecutor in Yemen, enquiring if the execution could be suspended.

The apex court heard a plea by petitioner organisation 'Save Nimisha Priya – International Action Council', seeking a direction to the Centre to use diplomatic channels to save Indian nurse Nimisha Priya, 38.

Priya, hailing from Kerala's Palakkad, was convicted of murdering her Yemeni business partner in 2017 and chopping and disposing off the body parts in an underground tank.

She is currently imprisoned in a jail in Sana'a.

Priya's mother and a social worker were in Yemen to negotiate with the family of the deceased for blood money.

The petitioner can arrange the blood money. The negotiating link was required.*—PTI*

The Kerala government is making a list of the 46 people, who had come into contact with the second patient. Their samples will be tested **PHOTO: PTI**

2nd suspected Nipah death in Kerala

PALAKKAD, 14 JULY

A 57-year-old man from Palakkad district in Kerala, who died on 12 July 12, is suspected to have been infected with the Nipah virus, prompting the government to ramp up contact tracing and field-level surveillance in the area.

The man had been undergoing treatment at a private hospital here.

His samples were tested at Manjeri Medical College, where the result came back positive for Nipah, Health Minister Veena George said in a statement.

The government is awaiting confirmation from the National Institute of Virology in Pune.

This is the second Nipah-related death in Kerala.

A native of Malappuram had recently died from the infection, while another patient from Palakkad remains hospitalised.

46 people reportedly came into contact with the patient.

Health teams are now carrying out fever surveillance in the region to detect any possible symptoms in others.

The minister has also instructed officials to step up the response team.

Authorities have urged people in Palakkad and Malappuram districts to avoid unnecessary visits to hospitals. An alert was sounded in hospitals in six districts.*—PTI*

Stunt artist SM Raju collapsed after a car stunt went wrong; he was declared dead at a hospital **PHOTO: PTI**

Tamil stunt artist Raju dies

CHENNAI, 14 JULY

Popular stunt master Mohan Raj alias SM Raju, 52, died during the shooting of an action scene for a film in Tamil Nadu's Nagapattinam.

Raj, who was driving an SUV in a high-octane stunt scene for director Pa Rajnith's Vettuvam, in Nagapattinam on 13 July, suddenly collapsed. His colleagues pulled him out of the vehicle and rushed him to a hospital, but he was declared brought dead.

A viral video showed people on the sets frantically running to his rescue. He is seen being extracted from the car.

"One of our great car jumping stunt artists, SM Raju, died while doing car stunts. RIP. Our stunt union and Indian film industry will be missing him," Silva, a stuntman and an actor posted on X. "The news of the death of stunt master Mohan Raj Annan fills me with shock and pain…your bravery will always be remembered, brother," director and screenwriter Mari Selvaraj said on X. *—PTI*

IIM rape accused bought pills to spike drink of victim

KOLKATA, 14 JULY

A student accused of rape at the Indian Institute of Management-Calcutta has confessed to purchasing sleeping pills from a local pharmacy.

He allegedly mixed them with cold drinks and water before offering them to the woman, who sought his counselling.

Several inconsistencies have emerged in the accused's statements, particularly regarding his intentions. He could not clarify why he would do this to someone who approached him for help. Evidence suggests that the survivor consumed the spiked drink before going to the boys' hostel room where the incident occurred.

A student of the Indian Institute of Management-Calcutta accused in the alleged rape of a student being produced at a Kolkata court **PHOTO: PTI**

After the alleged crime, the accused reportedly called a friend to recount what had transpired.

Police are also investigating the survivor's qualifications as a psychologist, as she lacked documentation to support her credentials. Authorities are probing potential external pressures impacting the victim's family, as discrepancies have appeared in the father's statements. *—PTI*

ODISHA STUDENT CASE: PRINCIPAL ARRESTED

BENGALURU, 14 JULY

The suspended principal of Fakir Mohan (Autonomous) College in Odisha's Balasore was arrested on Monday for not taking action on the complaints of a student, who immolated herself in the college campus recently.

She had complained to the college's internal complaints committee about being repeatedly sexually harassed by her head of the department, Samira Kumar Sahu. However, no action was taken. The accused was arrested.

The principal Dilip Ghosh was suspended on 12 July. He was booked for abetting the student's attempted suicide. Sahu demanded "favours" and threatened her to destroy the victim's future if she revealed about him to anyone. *—PTI*

Commuters cross a waterlogged road outside the Charbagh Railway Station after heavy rainfall in Uttar Pradesh' Lucknow **PHOTO: PTI**

Rains kill 14 in UP in just 24 hours

LUCKNOW, 14 JULY

At least 14 people have tragically died in rain-related incidents across Uttar Pradesh within a 24-hour period ending Sunday evening, as reported by officials. The fatalities, occurring between 8pm on Saturday and 8pm on Sunday, have been linked to lightning strikes, drowning, and snake bites.

In Gorakhpur, two individuals lost their lives due to lightning strikes, while single fatalities were reported in Jaunpur, Raebareli, Chandauli, Kushinagar, and Kanpur Dehat. Additionally, two people drowned in Chitrakoot, and another in Banda. Flash flood warnings were issued in 13 districts in Jharkhand. Floods killed seven people and injured another four in Nagpur division in Maharashtra. *—PTI*

KANWARIYAS DAMAGE DHABA OVER LACK OF ID CARD

MUZAFFARNAGAR, 14 JULY

A group of kanwariyas allegedly vandalised a dhaba in Muzaffarnagar, claiming the Muslim owners hadn't displayed their identity.

The incident occurred at Lucky Shudh Dhaba Bhojnalaya on a highway in Meerapur after the kanwariyas had lunch there.

Police reported that the group damaged furniture, kitchen items, and ceiling fans.

According to SHO Babloo Singh, the kanwariyas confronted the dhaba owner about the lack of identity display. A dhaba employee, Pawan, filed a complaint against unidentified kanwariyas for assault. This incident follows previous controversies regarding the display of religious identities by food outlets along the Kanwar route. *—PTI*

'Kanwariyas', Lord Shiva devotees, carry holy water during 'Kanwar Yatra' **PHOTO: PTI**

MAZAR IN NUH DAMAGED AHEAD OF 'JALABHISHEK' YATRA

NUH, 14 JULY

A mazar was damaged ahead of the Brij Mandal Jalabhishek Yatra in Tauru in Haryana's Nuh district, as security was ramped up in the district to ensure there is no repeat of the clashes that broke out during the religious procession two years ago.

The culprits behind the vandalism on 13 July were unidentified. A large number of police personnel have been deployed at the mazar in Tauru's Sainipura locality.

The Nuh district administration initiated necessary action in connection with the mazar's damage to ensure that the Jalabhishek yatra passes off peacefully.

Officials were instructed to keep vigil in their areas. *—PTI*

Police personnel keep vigil after a mazar was damaged ahead of the Brij Mandal Jalabhishek yatra at Tauri in Haryana's Nuh **PHOTO: PTI**

HOMEWARD BOUND

Shubhanshu's family await his return to earth with prayers

Shubhanshu Shukla with crew members of the Axiom-4 mission and International Space Station (ISS). After 18 days of intense science experiments at the ISS, it is time for farewells and feasts for Shubhanshu and three other astronauts, who are set to begin their return journey to earth on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

LUCKNOW, 14 JULY

As astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla is set to begin his journey back to earth after completing his 18-day stay aboard the International Space Station, his family in Lucknow is eagerly awaiting his safe return, saying they are filled with immense pride and emotion.

It was a joy for them to have seen Shubhanshu, "like a child", show them sights from space. Now the excited family was praying as the Axiom-4 mission undocks from the ISS on Monday and is expected to splashdown off the California coast on 15 July.

Shubhanshu's father, Shambhu Dayal Shukla thanked the public and Prime Minister Narendra Modi for blessing his son.

"His mission is coming to an end and we are all ready to welcome him back….." he said.

Asha Shukla (right) and Shambhu Dayal Shukla, parents of IAF Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla, awaiting his return **PHOTO: ANI**

Shambhu Dayal also shared fascinating details of his son's stay at the space station.

"He also showed us incredible views: the sunrise from space, the Earth's surface, mountains, and the movement of the moon.

Shubhanshu's journey is sure to inspire young minds.

Shubhanshu's mother, Asha Devi said, "Today is the first Monday of Sawan, and the family prayed to Lord Shiva at the temple for his safe return."

The family will give him a warm welcome when he eventually visits Lucknow, though he will first return to his workplace after splashdown on Tuesday.

Shubhanshu's sister, Suchi Shukla, said. "We're excited and nervous until splashdown happens, there's always a bit of anxiety. He was like a child with a new toy, thrilled about the mission. Watching him give us a space tour from the ISS like an excited kid was heartwarming."

Shukla is part of the Axiom-4 commercial space mission, and is only the second Indian to fly to space after Rakesh Sharma in 1984. *—PTI*

SALAR UPCLOSE

MOHAMMED YOUSUF

GBA will be a game-changer for City's development: Rizwan Arshad

A foot soldier of the Congress rising from the ranks to become an MLA, Rizwan Arshad has been the youth's face and voice in the party. In 2019, he made his debut in the Legislative Assembly by winning the Shivajinagar bypoll on a Congress ticket and retained it in 2023. In an interview with Salar News, Arshad, who has opposed the Centre's push for Hindi language, says: "We don't need a common language to unite us as Indians. Our roots as Indians are strong enough."

MLA Rizwan Arshad, who entered the Legislative Assembly after winning the 2019 bypoll, greets a child during a road and development works inspection in Shivajinagar; He is seen accompanied by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi

PHOTOS: MOHAMMED ASAD/ X/@ARSHADRIZWAN

After months of deliberations, the roadmap for the development of Greater Bengaluru has been completed, and it will be discussed in the Cabinet. Can you share the broad details of how it will benefit the administrative control of Bengaluru?

We will be announcing the boundaries of the new corporations next week. There are significant differences in the administrative mechanisms and structures that we have now created through the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA). Instead of one large corporation, there will be multiple smaller corporations which will be empowered, autonomous, and decentralised. When you have empowered and decentralised corporations, the administration is closer to the people, enabling a better understanding of their needs and more effective planning. I can confidently say that the GBA will definitely be a game-changer for Bengaluru's development.

BJP has opposed the formation of the Greater Bengaluru Authority, stating it will endanger the City's governance model and that non-Kannadigas could end up as mayors. Comment.

That phase is over now. When the joint legislature committee was formed to review the GBA Bill, BJP legislators who were also part of the panel should have opposed it then. While BJP may have opposed it as a party, individually, every member on the committee supported it. When Governor Thawarchand Gehlot sought clarifications on the Bill, a meeting was convened and the BJP's suggestions were incorporated. We have integrated everything into this Act. The GBA will go to the Cabinet next week. This is a futuristic Act for Bengaluru's development, designed to address the City's challenges. Therefore, regardless of who is in power, the GBA will be a model for urban governance.

Can you elaborate on your statement that the BJP's agenda is to impose Hindi and that the National Education Policy has been brought only to promote this language? How does it impact the states' local languages?

The Central government has always been pushing Hindi to be the primary language, attempting to override all other languages. But India is culturally diverse — from north to south, east to west — and yet we are united. That is why the world remembers our mantra of "unity in diversity". If we try to impose one language, one religion, or one culture over all others, it is detrimental to the unity of the country.

No language is inferior to another. For example, Kannada has thousands of years of history and a vast literary heritage. We have won eight Jnanpith awards, and recently, Banu Mushtaq won the Booker Prize for 'Heart Lamp'. Languages such as Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Marathi, Punjabi and Bengali are not lesser than the other. We should celebrate all languages.

Unfortunately, BJP, RSS and the Centre believe that unity can only come through Hindi. But we have always been united despite our linguistic differences. We do not need a common language to be united as Indians — our roots as Indians are strong enough.

Another concern being flagged by Opposition parties in Southern states is that when the delimitation of constituencies happens after the first census in 2026, their political representation in Parliament may remain the same or even go down. Union Home Minister Amit Shah has dismissed these fears, saying southern states will instead gain additional constituencies on a pro-rata basis. Your take?

Our concern stems from the last delimitation in 1971, when a cap was imposed on creating new constituencies based on population. Since then, population control measures were introduced, and southern states followed them dutifully. We brought down our total fertility rate significantly, between 1.66 per cent and 1.77 per cent, whereas the northern states, without concern for population growth, continued to have rates of 2.8 per cent to 3.1 per cent.

Now, the states that followed population control policies are being penalised, with the argument: "You have a lower population, so you should have fewer seats in Parliament". If our representation goes down because we followed the law, what happens to our voice in Parliament?

Can we take Amit Shah's word at face value? How many assurances have he and Prime Minister Narendra Modi made to this country? On every occasion, they have turned out to be false. They are habitual liars, and they cannot be taken seriously. This fear must be contested, and a message must be sent: Southern states will not accept this.

> **Corruption is going to be there; we cannot eradicate it overnight. Likewise, we can't eliminate communal ideologies and their effects on society overnight. It takes time, but we are on it**
>
> -Rizwan Arshad, Congress MLA

Congress came to power in 2023 on a campaign that focused on local issues, opposed corruption, and communal rhetoric. But the same issues are now becoming the bane of the party.

Corruption cannot be eradicated overnight. Likewise, we cannot eliminate communal ideologies or their effects on society overnight — it takes time, but we are working on it. BJP government, which is supposed to protect and balance society, has itself become an aggressor against our rights. They have become an agency that disturbs the communal fabric of society.

In Karnataka, I can proudly say, my government stands for equality and secularism. We oppose any form of discrimination, whether against the majority community, minorities, Dalits or Backward Classes.

Many ruling party legislators have complained about funds not being released for development works in their constituencies, with some claiming this is due to Congress' guarantee schemes.

I have not faced any paucity of funds. You cannot expect more funds than your requirements, and within what is allocated, you must prioritise. Of course, the guarantee schemes take up a large chunk of the State's finances, but one can still identify the nature of work to be done within the given budget.

These guarantee schemes are vital for people affected by inflation, unemployment and rising fuel costs. The lower middle class and those below the poverty line are living on the edge, and their problems need to be addressed through such guarantees.

You have been representing Shivajinagar since 2019. What are the major development works that have contributed to the constituency's makeover over the last six years?

I think it is better if the people of the constituency answer that. I can list any number of things, but fundamentally, we have changed the way Shivajinagar used to be decades ago — when there was no rule of law, the presence of antisocial elements and the lack of basic infrastructure or even garbage disposal systems. Today, you can see improvements in the quality of infrastructure, sewage systems, and footpaths. Schools have been established, and we are building a world-class degree college.

You came up through the ranks of Congress, having headed the state's youth wing twice. What is your take on many loyal workers not getting their due from the party leadership?

The youth are the country's future, and I came through the Youth Congress. When we worked on garbage disposal in Shivajinagar by targeting black spots, youth participation was key to the programme's success.

Elections have become expensive, and it's often difficult for common people to contest. That said, everything is not about money. If you have public support, a proper network, and a good reputation and standing in society, people will come out and vote, regardless of how much money you have or don't have.

You contested from Bengaluru Central twice, in 2014 and 2019. Why has the constituency been difficult for the Congress to win, with the BJP treating it as a citadel since 2009?

There are many reasons, and I don't want to go into all of them now. There are political factors at play. I have contested twice, and in 2024, AICC Secretary Mansoor Ali Khan was the candidate. He came very close to winning, losing by a margin of just 30,000 votes, which is not a large number in a Parliamentary election. He got good support, but we couldn't make it. Going forward, people like Mansoor, I and other young leaders must work harder to change this. I'm confident that in the next Lok Sabha polls, we will wrest this seat from the BJP.

During the 2023 Assembly polls, you had promised that the I Monetary Advisory (IMA) scam victims would get their money back. Yet, many have not received what they invested.

I never told investors they would get the full amount back. As someone in public life, I make commitments only after understanding the issue thoroughly. I said we would fight for justice and I am happy to say that the IMA scam is the only one in this country's history where recovery efforts have actually begun.

A competent authority was set up, the Special Investigation Team seized the accused's properties, and after many court battles, we were able to auction a lot of movable assets and recover Rs 100 crore. Now, immovable properties will be auctioned. I'm proud that the IMA case set a precedent. Today, even in other scams — Ambidant, Aala — recovery processes are underway. While victims may not get the full amount, this sends a strong message: those who run Ponzi schemes and defraud people will not get away with.

From representing the Congress Students' Union, to serving as the Youth Unit's President and now a legislator — what next?

I don't know. I have never planned my life. My life and its journey have always been at the mercy of Allah. I live in the moment. Whatever responsibility I am given, I try to fulfil it with utmost sincerity. I'm an MLA today, and my duty is to serve my constituency with dedication. As an MLA, I have raised all the relevant issues concerning the State, the country, and marginalised communities. I don't know what the future holds for me.

— Salar News

Watch full interview on Salar Digital YouTube

LETTERS

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As Bihar heads to polls, crime wave fuels law & order concerns

Back-to-back killings targeting businessmen, politicians, lawyers, teachers and ordinary citizens have raised serious concerns about Bihar's law and order, with police blaming the surge on the widespread availability of illegal firearms and ammunition.

Over the past 10 days, a string of killings — including those of businessman Gopal Khemka, BJP leader Surendra Kumar, a 60-year-old woman, a shopkeeper, a lawyer, and a teacher — has rocked the poll-bound state.

According to the latest State Crime Records Bureau (SCRB) data, the state recorded 1,376 murders with an average of 229 each month between January and June, compared to 2,786 in all of 2024 and 2,863 in 2023.

According to senior police officers, the proliferation of firearms, which are illegally manufactured or procured without a valid license, coupled with the unchecked availability of ammunition, have contributed to the recent spurt in violent crimes.

Bihar has consistently ranked among the top five states in terms of violent crimes, including those involving firearms, according to National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) figures. The state has held the second position in the violent crime rate in 2017, 2018, 2020 and 2022, NCRB data said.

Talking to PTI, DGP Vinay Kumar said, "Land disputes and property matters are the main reasons behind most of the killings. In such cases, the role of the police is limited and it starts after the crime takes place. Our force has achieved a 100 per cent detection rate".

The DGP, however, claimed that organised crime has come down compared to last year.

"Proliferation of firearms, illegally manufactured or procured without valid licenses, coupled with unchecked availability of ammunition, are issues which are being looked into by the authorities", he said.

"A state with such a large population, having over 60 per cent population under the age of 30 and unemployed, is bound to be vulnerable to law and order problems", Additional Director General of Police (Headquarters) Kundan Krishnan said.

"To check violent crimes, there is a need to plug the gaps in the existing system and standardise the process of issuing arms licenses," Krishnan, who is also the ADG of the Special Task Force (STF) of Bihar Police, told PTI.

According to the National Database of Arms Licenses-Arms License Issuance System (NDAL-ALIS) portal (Ministry of Home Affairs), Bihar has 82,326 firearms holders and 77,479 active arms licences.

Out of 141 licensed arms dealers in the state, only 114 are operational, while 27 have been found inoperative.

Data shows Patna as the leading district in Arms Act cases, averaging 321.7 cases annually

PHOTO: PTI

"This poses a serious threat of misuse. We have brought the matter to the notice of the authorities concerned. Licenses of such dealers must be suspended," Krishnan said.

An analysis of district-wise firearm licences to population reveals that Bhojpur has the highest density, with 205 firearms and 196 licensees per lakh population, surpassing Patna, which has 161 firearms and 156 licences per lakh.

SCRB data further shows Patna as the leading district in Arms Act cases, averaging 321.7 cases annually, followed by Begusarai (167.7), Muzaffarpur (158.3), Nalanda (117.9), and Vaishali (117.8).

In the last 10 years, the number of recovered country-made firearms has more than doubled from 2,356 in 2015 to 4,981 in 2024, it said.

A correlation between arms Act cases and violent crimes shows Patna again topping the list, averaging 82 violent incidents annually, followed by Motihari (49.53), Saran (44.08), Gaya (43.50), Muzaffarpur (39.93), and Vaishali (37.90).

"Most violent crimes in the state involve the use of firearms. However, ammunition used in these crimes are manufactured by licensed industrial units. Therefore, the identity of the 25 inoperative arms dealers out of 138 listed in the state can be exploited by criminals to illegally procure arms/ammunition", the ADG added.

Talking to PTI, Jitendra Rana, Inspector General (IG) of central range (Patna), said, "It is not true to say that gun-related violence has increased in Patna. Yes, some sensational murder cases have indeed taken place. But the accused have also been arrested in those cases and arms and ammunition were also recovered".

Commenting on the surge in violent cases, Abhayanand, former DGP, told PTI, "I must say that the existing criminal justice system is not able to match up to the crime. The legislature must make laws to give more power to police to check such crimes effectively".

Reacting to surge in crimes, RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav in a post on X said, "If the crumbling law and order and rampant corruption in Bihar aren't making anyone angry in the state, then we must say that the person's sense of justice and human compassion has died. Ignoring the government's failures and public sentiments in the name of caste and religion is disastrous for Bihar and the people of the state. Under the NDA's rule, 65,000 murders have taken place so far!!! Does the unconscious Chief Minister dare to make a statement on any such incident?"

—PTI

Shooting at Kentucky Church claims two lives

LEXINGTON, 14 JULY

Two women tragically lost their lives on Sunday during a shooting at a Kentucky church, which began when a state trooper was shot after a routine traffic stop. The suspect, who carjacked a vehicle post-traffic stop near Lexington's airport, fled to Richmond Road Baptist Church, where he opened fire, resulting in the deaths of a 72-year-old woman and a 32-year-old woman, according to the local coroner. Two additional individuals were injured—one critically—while the suspect was shot dead by police during the incident.

Police Chief Lawrence Weathers indicated that the suspect might have had connections to the church attendees. The trooper, who initiated the stop following a license plate reader alert, was reported to be in stable condition. *—PTI*

Search for missing ends after Houthi rebels sink ship

DUBAI, 14 JULY

The search for missing mariners after Yemen's Houthi rebels sunk two vessels in the Red Sea has concluded, with four presumed dead and 11 still unaccounted for, private security firms reported on Monday. Satellite images reveal extensive oil slicks trailing from where the bulk carrier 'Eternity C' sank, following the assault on 7 July. This attack, part of the Houthis' campaign against shipping amid the Israel-Hamas conflict, came just one day after the 'Magic Seas' was similarly targeted. The 'Eternity C', which featured a three-man security team, did not request military escorts. Ten individuals were rescued, including eight Filipino crew members and two security personnel from Greece and India. *—PTI*

PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

Cameroon Prez Biya seeks eighth term as Prez at 92

YAOUNDÉ, 14 JULY

Paul Biya, Cameroon's 92-year-old president, has announced his intention to seek an eighth term in the upcoming October elections, despite speculation he might step down. Biya, the second longest-serving leader in Africa after Equatorial Guinea's Teodoro Obiang, has been in power since 1982. His announcement follows months of uncertainty regarding his health, which has prompted government denials of his alleged death last year. Biya's tenure has been marred by allegations of corruption and increasing violence, particularly from separatist movements and the Boko Haram group. As Biya prepares for the election, several former allies have announced their candidacies. *—PTI*

SA police head linked to organised crime, grounded

JOHANNESBURG, 14 JULY

South Africa's President Cyril Ramaphosa has placed Police Minister Senzo Mchunu on immediate leave following serious allegations linking him to organised crime. In a televised address, Ramaphosa announced a judicial commission led by Deputy Chief Justice to investigate claims of interference in political killings and corruption within law enforcement. Mchunu denies any wrongdoing and claims he is prepared to respond to the accusations, which include receiving financial support from a controversial businessman. Mchunu allegedly oversaw the disbandment of a task force investigating political murders, claiming it was ineffective, despite unresolved cases. KwaZulu-Natal police chief Nhlanhla Mkhwanazi revealed evidence of payments from the businessman to Mchunu. *—Agencies*

US to send its Patriot air defence systems to Kyiv

Trump says its business as he likes it; angered by Putin

WASHINGTON, 14 JULY

Frustrated with Russian President Vladimir Putin's deceptive tactics against Ukraine, US President Donald Trump on Sunday announced that Washington will be sending its Patriot air defence systems to Kyiv. He added that the European Union would have to pay for it.

"We basically are going to send them various pieces of very sophisticated military. They're going to pay us 100 per cent for them, and that's the way we want it, and we've been trying to get that again," Trump at Joint Base Andrews in Maryland. "I haven't agreed on the number (of Patriots) yet, but they're going to have some because they do need protection, but the EU is paying for it. We're not paying anything for it, but we will send it. It'll be business for us.

"In the coming days, you'll see weapons flowing at a record level to help Ukraine defend themselves,"

US confirms shipment of 10 Patriot missile systems to Ukraine in the midst of heavy losses for Kiev *PHOTO: X*

Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham said on CBS' 'Face the Nation.' He added: "One of the biggest miscalculations (Russian President Vladimir) Putin has made is to play Trump. And you just watch, in the coming days and weeks, there's going to be a massive effort to get Putin to the table."

Meanwhile, Trump's Special Envoy to Ukraine and Russia, retired Lt Gen Keith Kellogg, arrived in Kyiv on Monday, a senior Ukrainian official said.

This comes as Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Friday stated that high-level talks are scheduled for this week with the US, as Trump reaffirmed Washington's commitment to resuming weapons supply to Kyiv.

Meanwhile, NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte was due in Washington on Monday and Tuesday. He planned to hold talks with Trump, Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth as well as members of Congress. *—ANI/PTI*

> **Putin really surprised a lot of people. He talks nicely, and then he bombs everybody in the evening. There's a little bit of a problem there, and I don't like it**
>
> —Donald Trump, US President

Trump marks 1st anniv of assassination attempt

Trump on Sunday marked the one-year anniversary of a failed attempt on his life, joining family and close advisers at the FIFA Club World Cup final. This comes as the Senate blamed the Secret Service for "inexcusable" failures in its operations.

EU ministers huddle after surprise 30% tariffs

European trade ministers are meeting in Brussels on Monday, after US announced of 30 per cent tariffs on the EU. "We should be ready to use all the tools in the toolbox," said Denmark's Foreign Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen.

ICE can deport immigrants with 6-hour notice

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) may deport migrants to countries other than their home nations with just a six-hour notice, a top Trump administration official said in a memo, Reuters reported.

ENHANCING RELATIONS

Russia, China discuss US ties, Ukraine conflict

MOSCOW, 13 JULY

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi convened in Beijing on Sunday to deliberate on their nations' relations with the United States, as well as the ongoing war in Ukraine. This dialogue comes ahead of Lavrov's participation in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's (SCO) foreign ministers' meeting in China.

According to statements released by both foreign ministries, the discussions centred on enhancing coordination between the two nations within key international arenas, including the United Nations Security Council, SCO, BRICS, the G20, and APEC. The emphasis was on fostering solidarity to effectively tackle challenges arising from a rapidly evolving global landscape.

Both Lavrov and Wang exchanged insights regarding the Korean Peninsula and the Iranian nuclear issue, indicating that their collaboration extends beyond their bilateral relationship.

China and Russia solidified their "no limits" partnership in February 2022 when President Vladimir Putin visited Beijing, just days before launching military operations in Ukraine. Putin has frequently indicated that he views China as an ally.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov meets his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi *PHOTO: PTI*

In contrast, the United States regards China as its primary competitor and Russia as its foremost nation-state threat, highlighting the complex geopolitical dynamics at play in the current international order. The meeting underscores the continuing alignment of interests between Russia and China amid increasing tensions with Western countries. *—Agencies*

Clashes between militias kill 30 in Syria, Israel joins in

DAMASCUS, 14 JULY

Clashes between local militias and clans in Syria's Sweida province have killed more than 30 people and injured nearly 100, and government forces were being sent to the area to restore order, authorities said.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reported at least 37 people killed, including two children, in the clashes between armed groups from the Druze religious minority and Sunni Bedouin clans around the province. The UK-based war monitor reported that military convoys were sent to the area to reinforce security checkpoints. Israel then said it struck military tanks in the region.

The observatory said the clashes started after a series of kidnappings between both groups, which began when members of a Bedouin tribe in the area set up a checkpoint where they attacked and robbed a young Druze man.

- The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reported at least 37 people killed, including two children, in the clashes between armed groups from the Druze religious minority and Sunni Bedouin clans

Rami Abdurrahman, who heads the observatory, said the conflict started with the kidnapping and robbery of a Druze vegetable seller, leading to tit-for-tat attacks.

The interior ministry in a statement called the situation a dangerous escalation that "comes in the absence of the relevant official institutions, which has led to an exacerbation of the state of chaos, the deterioration of the security situation, and the inability of the local community to contain the situation despite repeated calls for calm." *—PTI*

Heavy fighting has rocked the Druze-majority city of Sweida, as local militias and tribal forces clash in a brutal shootout *PHOTO: X*

236 YEARS OF GLORY

French Independence Day, or Bastille Day, on Monday. The day marks when Parisians stormed the Bastille fortress and prison on 14 July, 1789, igniting the French Revolution that overthrew the monarchy. This comes as President Emmanuel Macron announced 6.5 billion euros in extra military spending in the next two years because of 'new and unprecedented threats' *PHOTOS: @FRANCEDIPLO_EN and @EMMANUELMACRON*

Wildfire destroys historic Grand Canyon lodge

FLAGSTAFF, 14 JULY

A historic lodge at the Grand Canyon's North Rim was engulfed by flames from the rapidly spreading Dragon Bravo Fire, which has compelled authorities to close the North Rim for the season. The fire destroyed the Grand Canyon Lodge, the only accommodation in the area, alongside other structures, including the visitor centre and employee housing. Park Superintendent Ed Keable reported that approximately 50 to 80 structures were lost but thankfully no injuries have been recorded.

In Texas, torrential rains have complicated ongoing search efforts for flood victims after catastrophic flooding earlier this month claimed 132 lives. More than 160 persons are missing in Kerr County. *—PTI*

Bibi's ex-aide could face criminal charges over security info leak

JERUSALEM, 14 JULY

Israel's attorney general said on Sunday that a close adviser to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has been advised that he could face criminal prosecution on allegations of providing secret information with the intent of harming the country's security.

The development involving a central figure in what is popularly known in Israel as Qatargate comes after police earlier this year arrested the adviser, Jonatan Urich, and former spokesman Eli Feldstein on suspicion of accepting money from Qatar to promote a positive image of the Gulf Arab state in Israel.

Feldstein also has been indicted in a separate case involving the leak of classified information to a erman tabloid — and Sunday's statement says Urich could face criminal prosecution in that case.

Qatargate suspect Jonatan Urich attends a hearing at the Lod District Court in May *PHOTO: JONATHAN SHAUL/FLASH90*

30 KILLED IN STRAELI STRIKES ON GAZA

Meanwhile, Israeli strikes across the Gaza Strip overnight and into Monday killed at least 30 people, according to local hospitals. The Israeli military meanwhile said it killed a senior Hamas militant last month who had held a hostage in his home.

Twelve people were killed by strikes in southern Gaza, including three who were waiting at an aid distribution point, according to Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis, which received the bodies.

Shifa Hospital in Gaza City also received 12 bodies, including three children and two women, after a series of strikes in the north, according to the hospital's director, Dr. Mohammed Abu Selmia.*—PTI*

INDIA TO JOIN 19-NATION DRILL

Aus hosts largest ever military exercise

MELBOURNE, 14 JULY

Australia began the largest-ever war-fighting drills, Exercise Talisman Sabre. Nineteen nations, including India, with more than 35,000 military personnel are set to participate in the exercise over the next three weeks.

The operation is expected to attract the attention of Chinese spy ships.

Australia launched missiles from its M142 High Mobility Artillery Rocket System, known as HIMARS, on Monday during live-fire exercises at the Shoalwater Bay Training Area, a 4,500 square kilometre Outback expanse in Queensland state.

The HIMARS launchers were recently bought from the US.

"Today was the first time the Australian Army has live-fired our long-range, multi-domain platforms being the HIMARS, so it is a remarkable day," Brig. Nick Wilson told reporters.

Australia hosts Exercise Talisman Sabre, the largest-ever military war drills, with more than 35,000 military personnel from 19 nations participating. *PHOTO: X*

Talisman Sabre began in 2005 as a biennial joint exercise between US and Australia.

This year Canada, Fiji, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, South Korea, Singapore, Thailand, Tonga, and the United Kingdom, Australia's Defence Department said. Malaysia and Vietnam are also attending as observers.

The exercise will also take place in Papua New Guinea, Australia's nearest neighbour. It is the first time Talisman Sabre activities have been held outside Australia.

Chinese surveillance ships have monitored naval exercises off the Australian coast during the last four Talisman Sabre exercises and were expected to surveil the current exercise, Defence Industry Minister Pat Conroy said.

"The Chinese military have observed these exercises since 2017. It'd be very unusual for them not to observe it," Conroy said. "We'll adjust accordingly". *—PTI*

MasterChef host accused of sexual harassment

LONDON, 14 JULY

A report into BBC's MasterChef has upheld 45 allegations against presenter Gregg Wallace, including unwelcome physical contact and inappropriate sexual language. Conducted by an independent law firm for Banijay, the inquiry revealed a total of 83 allegations over a 19-year period, with some claims relating to culturally insensitive and racist comments.

It also says that 10 standalone allegations were made against other people, two of which were substantiated.

Following the report, Wallace was sacked from his role as fresh accusations emerged from 50 individuals who encountered him on various shows. In a statement, Banijay's CEO Patrick Holland expressed regret for the handling of complaints, acknowledging missed opportunities to address Wallace's behaviour.

The BBC also apologised and confirmed that it will not work with him again. While Wallace has been diagnosed with autism, he stated he does not wish to use it as an excuse for his actions.

The inquiry, conducted by an independent law firm, was ordered by MasterChef's production company Banijay in the wake of a BBC News investigation which first revealed claims of inappropriate sexual comments against Wallace. *—Agencies*

PHOTO: PTI

Gold rallies ₹200 to settle at ₹99,570/10g

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

Gold gained slightly on Monday. Gold of 99.9 per cent and 99.5 per cent purity appreciated by Rs 200 each to Rs 99,570 and Rs 99,000 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes), respectively, according to the All India Sarafa Association. The most traded gold contracts for August delivery climbed by Rs 518 or 0.53 per cent to Rs 98,336 per 10 grams on the Multi Commodity Exchange. "Gold has again resumed upside movement with prices poised to again move towards their all-time high, supported by rising tariff related uncertainty, possibility of escalation in the Russia-Ukraine war, and rising demand from ETF investors and central banks for diversification," Pranav Mer, Vice President, EBG - Commodity & Currency Research at JM Financial Services Ltd, said. *—PTI*

Rupee falls 22P to settle at 86.02 against US dollar

MUMBAI, 14 JULY

The rupee depreciated 22 paise and fell below 86 level to close at 86.02 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday amid a rise in global crude oil prices and a strengthening greenback. Foreign fund outflows and delay in any breakthrough in the India-US trade deal further pressured the local unit, according to forex traders. At the interbank foreign exchange, the local unit opened at 85.96 and traded in a narrow range of 85.92-86.05 before settling at 86.02 (provisional), down 22 paise from its previous close. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, rose 1.56 per cent to USD 71.46 per barrel in futures trade. *—PTI*

Groww to launch new trading terminal '915'

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

Stock broking firm Groww is set to introduce '915', India's first fully custom-built trading terminal designed for experienced and professional traders. This new platform will operate independently of the Groww app and aims to cater specifically to high-volume traders. With '915', users will enjoy the ability to customise their dashboards to align with their individual trading styles and data requirements. Although the company has not confirmed the launch details, industry insiders suggest it reflects Groww's intention to enhance its engagement with professional and full-time traders. Key features include historical straddle charts, a real-time profit and loss chart, fast order execution, and an array of advanced tools for a fully customisable trading workspace. *—PTI*

Bitcoin surpasses $1,20,000 amid regulatory hopes

SINGAPORE, 14 JULY

Bitcoin has reached a historic milestone, breaking the $120,000 barrier for the first time, peaking at $122,571.19 before settling at $121,952.61, a 2.4 per cent increase. This surge is attributed to optimistic investor sentiment following anticipated regulatory changes for the cryptocurrency industry, with the US House of Representatives set to debate key legislation this week. President Donald Trump has voiced his support for reform, further bolstering market confidence. IG market analyst Tony Sycamore noted the strong institutional demand and the potential for further gains, predicting a possible climb towards $125,000. Ethereum also saw a rise, hitting a five-month high of $3,059.60, while the overall cryptocurrency market value is now approximately $3.81 trillion. *—Agencies*

WPI inflation goes negative after 19 months; dips 0.13% in June

NEW DELHI, 14 JUL

Wholesale inflation (WPI) in India turned negative in June at (-) 0.13 per cent as against 0.39 per cent in May, official data from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry showed on Monday. This is the first time in 19 months that WPI has turned negative.

WPI-based inflation was 0.39 per cent in May. It was 3.43 per cent in June last year.

"(It) is primarily due to decrease in prices of food articles, mineral oils, manufacture of basic metals, crude petroleum & natural gas etc," the industry ministry said in a statement.

As per WPI data, food articles saw a deflation of 3.75 per cent in June, as against a deflation of 1.56 per cent in May, with vegetables seeing a sharp drop. Deflation in vegetables was 22.65 per cent in June, compared to 21.62 per cent in May.

For manufactured products, inflation was at 1.97 per cent, compared to 2.04 per cent in May. Fuel and power saw a negative inflation or deflation of 2.65 pc in June, compared to a deflation of 2.27 pc in May.

WPI-based inflation was 0.39 per cent in May. It was 3.43 per cent in June last year

PHOTO: PTI

ICRA senior Economist Rahul Agrawal said the seasonal sequential uptick in food prices has been relatively modest in July 2025 so far, which is expected to keep food print in the deflationary zone, unless there is an unusual surge in such prices in the remaining part of the month, especially for vegetables.

"Overall, ICRA expects the headline WPI to remain in the deflationary territory in July 2025 despite an unfavourable base, amid the sustained YoY deflation in food and crude oil prices," Agrawal said.

India Ratings and Research Paras Jasrai said the wholesale inflation in the first quarter of this fiscal stood at a five-quarter low of 0.4 per cent.

Consumer price inflation (CPI) had hit an over six-year low in May. According to the statistics ministry, the year-on-year inflation rate based on CPI for May was 2.82 per cent (provisional), the lowest since February 2019.

—PTI/ANI

Jane Street deposits ₹4.8K cr, requests Sebi to lift curbs

Market regulator says the request is under consideration

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

US-based hedge fund Jane Street, which allegedly made handsome gains through market manipulation, has deposited the mandated Rs 4,843.57 crore in an escrow account in favour of Sebi and requested it to lift certain restrictions.

The watchdog is examining the request, Sebi said in a statement on Monday.

In an interim order on 3 July, the regulator found Jane Street (JS) guilty of manipulating indices by taking bets in cash and futures & options markets simultaneously for making massive gains.

Sebi barred the hedge fund from accessing the market and impounded over Rs 4,843 crore in gains. The probe found that JS made a profit of Rs 36,671 crore on a net basis during the probe period from January 2023-May 2025. In compliance with the interim order, a sum of Rs 4,843.57 crore has been credited to an escrow account with a lien marked in favour of Sebi, the regulator said.

In an interim order on 3 July, Sebi declared Jane Street guilty of manipulating indices by taking bets in cash and futures & options markets simultaneously for making massive gains

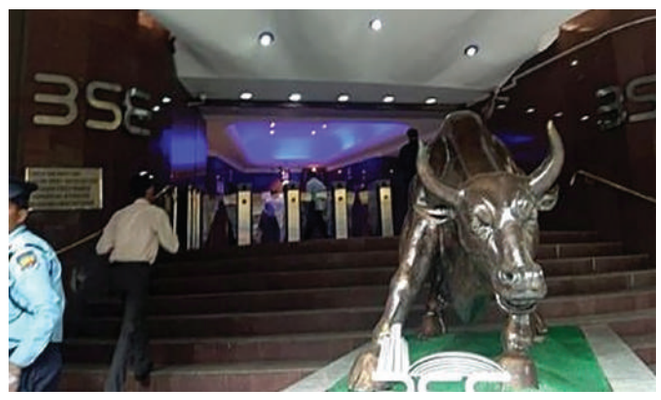
PHOTO: PTI

SEBI stated that JS deposited the alleged illegal gains and asked for them to be allowed to trade.

"They (Jane Street) have further stated that this action has been undertaken by them without prejudice to their rights and remedies which remain available to them in law and equity," the market regulators said in a release.

"(JS') request is currently under examination by Sebi," it added.

The regulator said it remains committed to following due process and ensuring the integrity of the securities market. *—PTI/ANI*



Markets fall for 4th day on selling in IT shares

MUMBAI, 14 JULY

Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty declined on Monday, extending the losing run to the fourth day amid selling in IT shares and foreign fund outflows.

The 30-share BSE Sensex dropped by 247.01 points or 0.30 per cent to settle at 82,253.46. During the day, it fell 490.09 points or 0.59 per cent to 82,010.38 but recovered some of the losses towards the close.

The 50-share NSE Nifty settled lower by 67.55 points or 0.27 per cent to 25,082.30.

Sensex has dropped nearly 1,460 points or 1.75 per cent and Nifty by 440 points or 1.73 per cent in the four days of fall since July 9.

Among Sensex firms, Asian Paints fell the most by 1.58 per cent. Tech Mahindra, Bajaj Finance, Infosys, HCL Tech, Tata Consultancy Services, Larsen & Toubro and Tata Motors were among the laggards.

However, Eternal, Titan, Mahindra & Mahindra and ITC were among the gainers.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 5,104.22 crore on Friday, according to exchange data.

The broader indices, however, outperformed the benchmark, with midcap and smallcap indices gaining between 0.71 per cent and 1.04 per cent.

However, stock-specific action continues with sector-wise pick-up in healthcare, realty, consumer & discretionary, while IT remains the laggard due to the risk of earnings downgrades in FY26, Nair added.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.99 per cent to USD 71.06 a barrel.

On Friday, the Sensex tanked 689.81 points or 0.83 per cent to settle at 82,500.47.

Similarly, the Nifty dropped 205.40 points or 0.81 per cent to 25,149.85. *—PTI*

China's exports surge in June

BANGKOK, 14 JULY

China's exports saw a boost in June, with a 5.8 per cent year-on-year increase, up from a 4.8 per cent rise in May, as businesses rushed to place orders before an August tariff deadline. Meanwhile, imports experienced a recovery for the first time this year, rising by 1.1 per cent, according to customs data released on Monday.

While exports to the United States fell by 16 per cent, this decline was an improvement on May's staggering 34.5 per cent drop. Following US President Donald Trump's imposition of tariffs up to 245 per cent, the two nations reached a truce to facilitate discussions. Retailers, previously halting imports of clothes, toys, and shoes, resumed shipments from China.

Despite this positive trend in trade, experts have cautioned against excessive optimism

PHOTO: FREEPIK

Despite this positive trend in trade, experts caution against excessive optimism. Zichun Huang of Capital Economics warned of persistent high tariffs and constraints on Chinese manufacturers' ability to cut prices and increase global market share, predicting a slowdown in export growth in future quarters.

In the first half of the year, China's total trade reached over 20 trillion yuan, with a reported trade surplus of $586 billion. Exports to Southeast Asia surged by 13 per cent year-on-year, though exports to the EU faced challenges, particularly in the auto sector, where they plummeted by nearly 38 per cent. *—PTI*

Niti: Exports to US to become competitive

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

Indian exports to the US will become more competitive following imposition of higher tariffs by the Trump administration on countries, including China, Canada, and Mexico, Niti Aayog said in a report on Monday.

The Aayog in its third edition of 'Trade Watch Quarterly', said there will be significant opportunities for India in the US markets both in terms of the number of products and volume of the US market.

"India is expected to gain competitiveness in 22 out of the top 30 categories (HS 2 level), representing a market size of USD 2,285.2 billion," the Aayog said.

It further explained that China, Canada, and Mexico are the leading exporters to the US in these categories, therefore higher tariffs on these countries at 30 per cent, 35 per cent, and 25 per cent, respectively, will enhance India's competitiveness.

For 17 products (accounting for 28 per cent of India's export to the US) out of the top 100 products at the HS-4 level, the Aayog said India's competitiveness remains unchanged due to no change in tariff differential. *—PTI*

Pune's Cafe Goodluck loses its licence

PUNE, 14 JULY

The Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has suspended the licence of the renowned eatery Cafe Goodluck in Pune due to hygiene violations, an official has announced. This action follows a viral video showing what appeared to be glass shards in a bun from the establishment.

An inspection was held after the FDA responded to reports of the glass being found in a food item. "During the inspection, several unhygienic conditions were also identified," said an FDA official *—PTI*

Ola Q1 revenue up 35.5%

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

Ola Electric has announced a 35.5 per cent increase in its revenue from operations for the April-June quarter, reaching Rs 828 crore, up from Rs 611 crore in the preceding quarter. The Bengaluru-based firm delivered 68,192 vehicles in Q1 FY26, a 32.7 per cent rise from the previous quarter's 51,375 units.

The company reported that its automotive division achieved EBITDA positivity in June, driven by strong gross margins linked to its vertical integration strategy. Ola Electric's cost optimisation initiative, Project Lakshya, has significantly decreased monthly operating expenses, reducing them from Rs 178 crore to Rs 105 crore. The firm aims to lower expenses further to Rs 130 crore by the end of FY26.

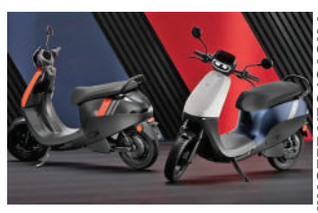


PHOTO: OLA ELECTRIC

Looking ahead, Ola Electric expects to sell between 325,000 and 375,000 vehicles this fiscal year, anticipating revenues of Rs 4,200 to Rs 4,700 crore. *—PTI*

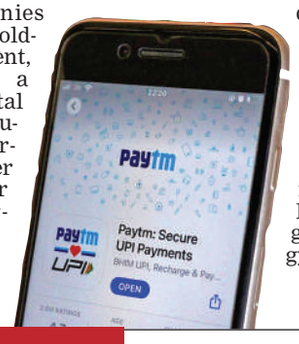
RISING CONFIDENCE IN PAYTM; MFS AND FPIS BOOST STAKE

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

Domestic mutual funds have raised their stake in Paytm to approximately 14 per cent, an increase from 13 per cent in the previous quarter, driven by contributions from Motilal Oswal and Bandhan Mutual Funds, according to the April-June 2025-26 shareholding pattern. Additionally, insurance companies lifted their holdings by 1 per cent, resulting in a surge in total domestic institutional ownership from 14 per cent to 16 per cent quarter-on-quarter.

Foreign portfolio investors also bolstered their overall stake, which grew from 18 per cent to 21 per cent, with notable contributions from Amansa Holdings, Societe Generale – Odi, and Theleme India Master Fund. In contrast, FDI decreased to 33 per cent from 37 per cent due to a 4 per cent stake sale by Antfin (Netherlands).

This increase in both domestic institutional and foreign portfolio holdings highlights growing investor confidence in Paytm's growth strategy. *—PTI*



MISLEAD BY MEDIA

Tesla set to invest in xAI as Musk firms seemingly merge

BENGALURU, 14 JULY

Tesla is set to poll its shareholders on whether to invest in xAI, as Elon Musk's companies begin to unite towards an AI-driven future. The move comes shortly as his space company SpaceX invested $2 billion in xAI, according to Reuters.

The recently upgraded Grok, X's AI chatbot, is reportedly at the centre of Musk's plan. Grok is already used for handling customer queries on Starlink, SpaceX's satellite internet service, and tests are underway to bring it into Tesla's Optimus robots. Musk reportedly wants Grok to be the main AI system running across his entire ecosystem.

Since the launch of xAI -- which developed the generative AI assistant Grok -- Musk has floated the potential synergies between the AI start-up and his two crown jewels, SpaceX and Tesla.

Musk said the final decision of investing in XAI was up to Tesla shareholders.

"It's not up to me. If it was up to me, Tesla would have invested in xAI long ago. We will have a shareholder vote on the matter," Musk wrote.

Meanwhile, SpaceX's $2 billion investment into XAI is one of the largest the company has made outside of its own space operations.

According to the Financial Times, Musk is seeking a valuation between $170 and $200 billion for xAI in a new funding round. *—Salar News with Agencies*

Centre defends decision to ease SO2 norms

NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

The Central government has defended its recent decision to relax sulphur dioxide (SO_2) emission standards for thermal power plants, asserting that the changes were informed by extensive scientific studies and stakeholder consultations.

Following a notification on 11 July that extended deadlines and exempted many coal plants from installing flue gas desulphurisation units, the Ministry of Environment claimed media portrayals of the move as a "regulatory dilution" were misleading.

The ministry stated that the revised norms were based on consultations with stakeholders and research from reputable institutions, including IIT Delhi and the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute. It emphasised that the decision is backed by current ambient air quality data and trends in emissions.

- The ministry stated that the revised norms were based on consultations with stakeholders and research from reputable institutions

Addressing concerns over the updated National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for SO_2, which were last revised in 2009, the ministry asserted that age alone does not render them obsolete. It referenced a study indicating that sulphate contributes minimally to PM2.5 levels near thermal power plants, challenging claims of a significant health threat posed by SO_2.

Of approximately 600 thermal power units in India, the changes primarily affect Category C plants, which have been exempted from SO_2 regulations until 2029.

This government's defence comes after studies claimed that the Centre misrepresented studies to justify easing the norms. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X/@WILLIAMMOUW

Mouw wins ISCO Championship for first Tour title

LOUISVILLE, 14N JULY

William Mouw overcame a seven-stroke deficit Sunday to win the ISCO Championship for his first PGA Tour title, shooting a 9-under 61 and waiting nearly two hours to see if his 10-under 270 total would hold up. Mouw won when third-round leader Paul, who was playing the 10th hole at Hurstbourne Country Club when Mouw finished, missed a 55-foot birdie try from the front fringe on the par-4 18th. "I was mentally ready for a playoff, and if it came to that, I was ready," Mouw said. "But that wasn't the case, and I'm just blessed to be the winner." Mouw won in his 20th start on the PGA Tour. Peterson shot a 69 to finish a stroke back in the opposite-field PGA Tour event also sanctioned by the European Tour.—*PTI*

Women's World Cup: Divya, Humpy cruise into last-16

BATUMI, 14 JULY

Woman Grandmaster Divya Deshmukh and the country's first woman to become a GM, Koneru Humpy, made it to the last-16 of the FIDE Women's World Cup in contrasting fashion here. Divya, a point ahead, needed a draw, which she got against Teodora Injac of Serbia, while Humpy had to work hard to oust Kulon Klaudia of Poland. With two Indians sealing their spots in the last-16, the other three in the competition D Harika, Vantika Agrawal, and R. Vaishali too can make the grade, but it all depends on how they perform in the tie-breaker.—*PTI*

PHOTO: X/@NEWYORK

MI New York wins Major League Cricket 2025 title

DALLAS, 14 JULY

MI New York clinched their second Major League Cricket Trophy in three years, defeating Washington Freedom by five runs with former South African keeper-batter Quinton de Kock smashing a fine half-century at the Grand Prairie Stadium here. De Kock's 46-ball 77, studded with six boundaries and four sixes, helped MI New York, owned by IPL franchise Mumbai Indians, to a competitive 180 for 7 in 20 overs. In reply, Washington Freedom could only manage 175/4 despite New Zealand opening batter Rachin Ravindra's quick-fire 70 (41 balls) and country-mate Glenn Phillips' unbeaten 34-ball 48.—*PTI*

PHOTO: X/@GOOCH

American Talor Gooch wins LIV Golf Andalucia

SOTOGRANDE, 14 JULY

American Talor Gooch won LIV Golf Andalucia on Sunday for his second LIV Golf title in three visits to Valderrama and fourth overall on the Saudi-funded tour. Gooch closed with a 1-under 70 to finish at 8 under, a stroke ahead of Spanish star Jon Rahm (65). Rahm led Legion XIII to its third team title of the season. Gooch has a record 13 trophies, four regular-season individual wins, seven regular-season team wins, one team championship in 2022 with 4Aces, and one individual championship in 2023. Abraham Ancer was third at 5 under after a 66. —*PTI*

England lords over India at the Lords

3rd Test: India suffer heartbreak, fall short of heroic chase from Jadeja & Siraj by 22 runs

LONDON, 14 JULY

Ravindra Jadeja's heroic effort went in vain as England edged out India by 22 runs on the fifth and final day of a wildly fluctuating third Test, with skipper Ben Stokes and Jofra Archer playing pivotal roles here on Monday.England thus go 2-1 up in the five-match series.

The day started with India requiring 135 runs and England having to pick six wickets after setting the visitors a 193-run target. The hosts got four Indian batters out before lunch but were made to work hard for the remaining two wickets in the last two sessions.India were finally all out for 170.Archer (3/55) and Stokes (3/48) were the chief architects of the English victory, even as Jadeja battled hard for India with a gritty unbeaten 61.India lost the big wickets of Rishabh Pant (9), KL Rahul (39), Washington Sundar (0), and Nitish Reddy (13) in the first session to hand England the advantage.Lead pacer Archer sent Pant's off stump for a walk with a jaffa that straightened after landing on the perfect length.

Skipper Stokes rose to the occasion as he trapped KL Rahul in front of the wicket, giving the momentum back to England. The on-field umpire was not convinced by the England team's loud appeal for an lbw, prompting Stokes to go upstairs, and the decision came in his favour.

Jofra was on the money consistently this morning and pulled off a brilliant catch off his bowling to send back Sundar and Chris Woakes, and then had Washington Sundar edge one to the keeper. Their efforts paved the way for England's victory.

Player of the match, England's captain Ben Stokes, reacts after winning third test cricket match against India *PHOTO:PTI*

ANDERSON TENDULKAR TROPHY

Siraj fined 15 per cent of match fee for fiery send-off to Duckett

India pacer Mohammed Siraj was on Monday penalised 15 per cent of his match fee and docked one demerit point following an aggressive reaction to the wicket of England opener Ben Duckett on day four of the third Test at Lord's here.

Siraj, who has taken four wickets in the Test, was found guilty of breaching Article 2.5 of the International Cricket Council's Code of Conduct for Players and Player Support Personnel, which relates to "using language, actions or gestures which disparage or which could provoke an aggressive reaction from a batter upon his/her dismissal during an International Match".Siraj gave Duckett a fiery send-off and brushed shoulders with the opener after dismissing him for 12 runs in England's second innings.

Cricket has got a bit more friendly over the years: Trescothick

England assistant coach Marcus Trescothick feels cricket has become more friendly because of franchise tournaments all around the world, and that the constant nudging between India and the hosts in the ongoing Lord's Test has provided the much-needed competitive edge to the game. There has been an exchange of words between India and England players in the third Test, but it has not led to bad blood, which is good for the game."Having that competitive edge helps the situation. It helps the atmosphere in the series," Trescothick said after the fourth day's play

Brief Scores:
England: 387 and 192.
India: 387 and 170 all out in 74.5 overs (KL Rahul 39, Ravindra Jadeja 61 not out; Jofra Archer 3/55, Ben Stokes 3/48). —*PTI*

SA beat Zimbabwe

It's just not getting any easier for Zimbabwe. After suffering two heavy defeats to South Africa in the Tests, they opened their T20I triangular series, which also includes New Zealand, with a loss. It was Zimbabwe's sixth successive T20I defeat to South Africa, against whom they are yet to register a win after two other games between the sides produced no results. South Africa, playing in their first T20I this year - and first under Shukri since he was named all-format coach will be pleased with their early outing. Chasing 142, they wobbled at 38 for 3, but debutant Rubin top-scored with 45, and shared in a 72-run fourth-wicket stand with Dewald Brevis, who contributed 41 off just 17 balls. .South Africa 142 for 5 (Hermann 45, Brevis 41, Ngarava 3-35) beat Zimbabwe 141 for 6 (Raza 54*, Bennett 30, Linde 3-10) by five wickets

Sinner's redemption & will to beat Alcaraz

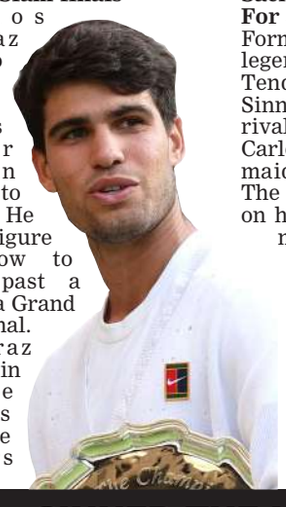
LONDON, 14 JULY

Jannik Sinner needed this victory. He wanted to win Wimbledon, of course, and it would have meant a lot to him no matter who the opponent was in the final.

"It is important, for sure," the No. 1-ranked Sinner said Sunday night after prevailing 4-6, 6-4, 6-4, 6-4 against No. 2 Alcaraz, "because when you lose several times against someone, it's not easy."

Sinner had lost five matches in a row against Alcaraz, none more disheartening than the one they played last month in the French Open final. Sinner grabbed a two-set lead in that one, then held a trio of championship points, before losing in five sets after 5 hours, 29 minutes.

Alcaraz's first loss in six Grand Slam finals



Carlos Alcaraz must do something he's never been forced to before: He must figure out how to move past a loss in a Grand Slam final.

Alcaraz was 5-0 in title matches at the majors until Sunday, when his reign at Wimbledon ended with a 4-6, 6-4, 6-4, 6-4 defeat against No. 1 Jannik Sinner.

"It's always a bad feeling losing matches," the second-ranked Alcaraz said. "It's a little bit even worse when you lose in a final."

Alcaraz had won 20 matches in a row at the All England Club, grabbing the 2023 and 2024 championships with victories over Novak Djokovic.

Sachin Tendulkar's Post For Jannik Sinner

Former Indian cricketer and legendary batter Sachin Tendulkar hailed Jannik Sinner as he outclassed his rival and Spanish sensation Carlos Alcaraz to secure his maiden Wimbledon title The Master Blaster posted on his official X handle, "A match befitting a Wimbledon Final, both Sinner and Alcaraz kept demanding the best out of each other. Congratulations, Sinner, you belong to a special club today. Well played, Alcaraz, many more finals to come your way." —*PTI*

SINNER THE WINNER

ROUND	OPPONENT	RESULT	SCORE
1st	Luca Nardi	W	6-4, 6-3, 6-0
2nd	Aleksandar Vukic	W	6-1, 6-1, 6-3
3rd	Pedro Martinez	W	6-1, 6-3, 6-1
4th	Grigor Dimitrov	W	3-6, 5-7, 2-2, Retired
QFs	Ben Shelton	W	7-6 (7-2), 6-4, 6-4
SFs	Novak Djokovic	W	6-3, 6-3, 6-4
Final	Carlos Alcaraz	W	4-6, 6-4, 6-4, 6-4

CLUB WORLD CUP

Chelsea first English side to win title twice

EAST RUTHERFORD, 14 JULY

Cole Palmer scored twice and fed João Pedro for a goal as Chelsea overwhelmed Paris Saint-Germain in the first half and beat the European champions 3-0 on Sunday in the final of the first expanded Club World Cup.

Palmer had almost identical left-footed goals from just inside the penalty area in the 22nd and 30th minutes, then sent a through pass that enabled João Pedro to chip goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma in the 43rd for his third goal in two starts with the Blues.

A 23-year-old who joined Chelsea from Manchester City two years ago, Palmer scored 18 goals this season.

A heavy favorite who had outscored opponents 16-1, PSG had been looking to complete a quadruple after winning Ligue 1, the Coupe de France, and its first Champions League title.

Before a tournament-high crowd of 81,188 at MetLife Stadium that included U.S. President Donald Trump, Chelsea showed the energy of a fourth day of rest after its semifinal, one more than PSG. Trump was booed when he walked on the field for the postgame awards, then posed with Chelsea players after he and FIFA president Gianni Infantino handed the trophy to captain Reece James.

Chelsea's Reece James lifts the trophy as he celebrates with teammates after winning the FIFA Club World Cup, US President Donald Trump looks on *PHOTO: X/@CHELSEAFC*

PSG Coach Luis Enrique Engages In Physical Fight

Paris Saint-Germain finally tasted defeat as Premier League giants Chelsea handed the Champions League winners a 3-0 bashing in the final of the FIFA Club World Cup on Sunday.

The match also saw an ugly altercation take place between a group of Chelsea and PSG players. The tense situation in the middle even saw PSG coach Luis Enrique intervene and seemingly hit Chelsea striker Joao Pedro, before the latter fell on the ground. After the game, Enrique admitted that such a situation in the middle could've been avoided. —*PTI*

PSG manager Luis Enrique seemingly hit Chelsea forward Joao Pedro *PHOTO: X/@LUISENRIQUE_2121*

WTA Rankings: Iga Swiatek rises to 3rd

LONDON, 14 JULY

New Wimbledon champion Iga Swiatek rose to third while runner-up Amanda Anisimova made her Top 10 debut in the latest WTA Rankings released on Monday.

Former World No.1 Swiatek, who defeated USA's Anisimova 6-0, 6-0 in Saturday's final to clinch her maiden title at SW19 and overall sixth Major, gained one spot. As a result, the 24-year-old Pole moved past Jessica Pegula, who lost in the opening round.

Anisimova, who had failed to even qualify for the main draw at The Championships last year, rose to a career high of seven after jumping eight spots.

Top 10 (along with ranking points) 1 Aryna Sabalenka 12,420 2 Coco Gauff (USA) 7,669 3 (+1) Iga Swiatek (POL) 6,813 4 (-1) Jessica Pegula (USA) 6,423 5 (+2) Mirra Andreeva 5,163 6. Qinwen Zheng (CHN) 4,803 7 (+5) Amanda Anisimova (USA) 4,470 8 Madison Keys (USA) 4,374 9 (-4) Jasmine Paolini (ITA) 3,576 10 (-1) Paula Badosa (ESP) 3,454. —*PTI*

TO ENSURE ACCOUNTABILITY

Nat'l Sports Governance Bill this monsoon session

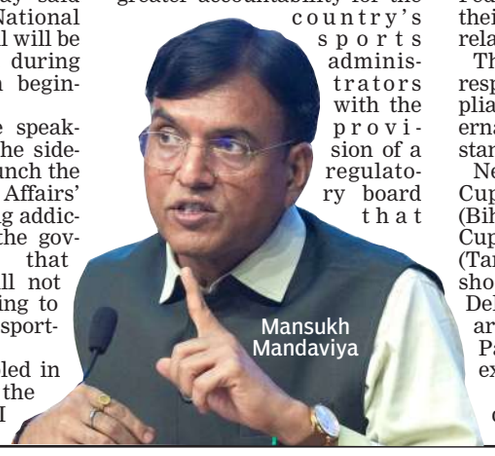
NEW DELHI, 14 JULY

Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Monday said the long-awaited National Sports Governance Bill will be tabled in Parliament during the monsoon session beginning July 21.

The minister, while speaking to the media on the sidelines of an event to launch the Department of Youth Affairs' initiatives against drug addiction, also reiterated the government's position that Pakistani athletes will not be stopped from coming to India for multi-lateral sporting engagements.

"The bill will be tabled in the Parliament during the upcoming session. I will give more details in a couple of days," Mandaviya said.

The bill seeks to ensure greater accountability for the country's sports administrators with the provision of a regulatory board that would have the power to grant recognition and decide funding to National Sports Federations (NSFs) based on their adherence to provisions related to good governance.



Mansukh Mandaviya

The board will also be responsible for ensuring compliance with the highest governance, financial, and ethical standards.

Next month's men's Asia Cup hockey tournament (Bihar), the FIH Junior World Cup in November-December (Tamil Nadu), and the junior shooting World Cup (New Delhi) in September-October are the major events where Pakistani participation is expected.

"Our stand is clear. We don't have any problems playing with Pakistan in any international sporting event, be it cricket, hockey, or any other sport. But when it comes to bilateral engagements, the government position is known to all," Mandaviya said.

The Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) has sought clearance from its government for participation in the two tournaments in India, but there is no clarity on whether it has been granted.

"We have told Pakistan that we will grant them visas for the Asia Cup and Junior World Cup hockey tournaments, but it is up to their government now to decide whether to send teams or not. We have no problem," the sports minister said. —*PTI*

WI pacemen reduce Australia to 99-6 in the third test

KINGSTON, 14 JULY

Cameron Green produced a defiant innings as Australia struggled to 99-6 for an overall lead of 181 in the face of hostile fast bowling from the West Indies under lights Sunday on Day 2 of the third cricket test.

Green was 42 not out at stumps and with captain Pat Cummins (5) managed to arrest the slide of the Australian second innings in difficult night conditions at Sabina Park. The pace bowlers dominated all three sessions on Sunday, with 15 wickets falling across both teams. Australia's all-pace attack had earlier given the visitors the upper hand when it dismissed the West Indies for 143 in the late afternoon to take an 82-run first-innings lead.

When the lights were turned on, Australia faced a tough contest with the swinging pink ball and especially intimidating bowling from Alzarri Joseph (3-19) and Shamar Joseph (2-26) as it tried to build its advantage.

Australia 225 and 99 for 6 (Green 42*, Alzarri 3-19, Shamar 2-26) lead West Indies 143 (Campbell 36, Boland 3-34, Cummins 2-24, Hazlewood 2-32) by 181 runs. —*PTI*